SERMONS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING,

I. DIRECTIONS how to hear SERMONS.
II. WORLDLY BUSINESS no Plea for the Neglect of RELIGION.
III. The MARKS of the NEW BIRTH.
IV. The POWER of CHRIST's RESURRECTION.
V. The DUTY of searching the SCRIPTURES.
VI. SATAN's DEVICES.
VII. The KNOWLEDGE of JESUS CHRIST the best KNOWLEDGE.
VIII. The heinous SIN of DRUNKENNESS.

To which are added,

Several PRAYERS.

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SERMON I.

DIRECTIONS how to hear SERMONS.

LUKE viii. 18.

Take heed therefore how you hear.

THE Occaſion of our Lord's giving this Caution was this: Perceiving that much People were gathered together, to hear Him out of every City, and knowing (for He is God, and knoweth all Things) that many, if not moſt of them, would be Hearers only, and not Doers of the Word, He ſpake to them by a Parable, wherein, under the Similitude of a Sower, that went out to ſow his Seed, He plainly intimated how few there were amongſt them who would receive any ſaving Benefit from his Doctrine, or bring forth Fruit unto Perfection.

The Application, one would imagine, ſhould be plain and obvious: But the Diſciples, as yet unenlightened in any great Degree by the Holy Spirit, and therefore unable to ſee into the hidden Myſteries of the Kingdom of God, dealt

our Saviour, as People ought to deal with their Miniſters—diſcourſed with Him privately about the Meaning of what He had taught them in Publick, and with a ſincere Deſire of doing their Duty, asked for an Interpretation of the Parable.

Our bleſſed Lord, as He always was willing to inſtruct thoſe that were teachable, (herein ſetting His Miniſters an Example to be courteous and eaſy of Acceſs,) freely told them the Signification of it. And withal, to make them more cautious and more attentive to his Doctrine for the future, He tells them, that they were in an eſpecial Manner to be the Light of the World, and were to proclaim on the Houſe-Top whatſoever He told them in Secret. And as their improving the Knowledge already imparted, was the only Condition upon which more was to be given them, it therefore highly concerned them to take heed how they heard.

From the Context then it appears, that the Words were primarily ſpoken to the Apoſtles themſelves. But becauſe they were the Repreſentatives of the whole Church, and 'tis to be feared out of thoſe many Thouſands that flock to hear Sermons, but few comparatively ſpeaking are effectually influenced by them; I cannot but think it very neceſſary to remind you of the Caution given by our Lord to his Diſciples, and to exhort you with the utmoſt Earneſtneſs to *take heed how you hear.*

In Proſecution of which Deſign I ſhall in the following Diſcourſe,

I. *Firſt,*

I. *First*, Prove that every one ought to take all Opportunities of hearing Sermons. And,

II. *Secondly*, I ſhall lay down ſome Cautions and Directions, in order to your hearing them with Profit and Advantage.

I. And, *Firſt*, I am to prove that every one ought to take Opportunities of hearing Sermons.

That there have always been particular Perſons ſet apart by God to inſtruct and exhort his People to practice what He ſhould require of them, is evident from many Paſſages of Scripture.---St. *Jude* tells us, that *Enoch* the ſeventh from *Adam* propheſied, or preached, concerning the Lord's coming with ten thouſand of His Saints to Judgment. And *Noah*, who lived not long after, is ſtiled by St. *Peter*, *a Preacher of Righteouſneſs*. And though in all the intermediate Space between the Flood and Giving of the Law, we hear but of few Preachers, yet we may reaſonably conclude, that God never left himſelf without Witneſs, but at ſundry Times, and after divers Manners ſpoke to our Fathers by the Patriarchs and Prophets.

But however it was before, we are aſſured that after the Delivery of the Law, God has conſtantly ſeparated to Himſelf a certain Order of Men to preach to, as well as pray for, his People; and commanded them to enquire their Duty at the Prieſts Mouths. And though the *Jews* were frequently led into Captivity, and for their Sins ſcattered abroad through the Face of the Earth, yet he never utterly forſook his Church, but ſtill kept up a Remnant of Prophets

and Preachers, as *Ezekiel*, *Jeremiah*, *Daniel*, and others, to reprove, inſtruct, and call them to Repentance.

Thus was it under the Law. Nor has the Church been worſe, but infinitely better provided for under the Goſpel: For when *Jeſus Chriſt*, that great High Prieſt, had through the Eternal Spirit offered himſelf as a full, perfect, ſufficient Sacrifice, Oblation and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World, and after his Reſurrection had all Power committed to him both in Heaven and Earth, He gave Commiſſion to his Apoſtles, and in them to all ſucceeding Miniſters, to go and preach his Goſpel to every Creature; promiſing to be with them, to guide, aſſiſt, ſtrengthen and comfort them "always, "even to the End of the World."

But if it be the Duty of Miniſters to preach (and Woe be to them if they do not preach the Goſpel, for a Neceſſity is laid upon them) no doubt, the People are obliged to attend to them; for otherwiſe, wherefore are Miniſters ſent?

And how can we here avoid admiring the Love and tender Care which our dear Redeemer has expreſſed for his Spouſe the Church? Who, becauſe he could not be always with us in Perſon, on account it was expedient He ſhould go away, and as our Fore-runner take Poſſeſſion of that Glory he had purchaſed by his precious Blood, yet would not leave us comfortleſs, but firſt ſettled a ſufficient Number of Paſtors and Teachers; and afterwards, according to his Promiſe, actually did and will continue to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt to furniſh them and their Succeſſors with proper Gifts and Graces for the Work of the Miniſtry, for

the

the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of his Body in Love, till we all come in the Unity of the Spirit, to the Fulneſs of the Meaſure of the Stature of *Chriſt*.

Oh! how inſenſible are thoſe of this unſpeakable Gift, who do deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, who crucify the Son of God afreſh, and put him to an open Shame, by wilfully refuſing to attend on ſo great a Means of their Salvation? How dreadful will the End of ſuch Men be? How aggravating, that Light ſhould come into the World, that the glad Tidings of Salvation ſhould be ſo very frequently in this populous City, and that ſo many ſhould loath this ſpiritual Manna, this Angels Food; and call it light Bread? How much more tolerable will it be for *Tyre* and *Sidon*, for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, than for ſuch Sinners? For better Men had never heard of a Saviour's being born, than after they have heard, not to give heed to the Miniſtry of thoſe, who are employed as his Ambaſſadors, to tranſact Affairs between God and their Souls.

We may, though at a Diſtance, without a Spirit of Propheſy, foretell the deplorable Condition of ſuch Men; and behold them caſt into Hell, lifting up their Eyes, being in Torment, and crying out, How often would our Miniſters have gathered us, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings!——But we would not. — Oh that we had known in that our Day, the Things that belonged to our everlaſting Peace!——But now they are for ever hid from our Eyes.

Thus wretched, thus inconceivably miſerable, will ſuch be as ſlight and make a Mock at the publick preaching of the Goſpel—But tak-

ing it for granted, there are but few, if any, of this unhappy Stamp, who think it worth their while to tread the Courts of the Lord's Houſe, I paſs on now to the

II. *Second* general Thing propoſed,—To lay down ſome Cautions and Directions, in order to your hearing Sermons with Profit and Advantage.

And here, if we reflect on what has been already delivered, and conſider that Preaching is an Ordinance of God, a Means appointed by *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf for promoting his Kingdom amongſt Men, you cannot reaſonably be offended, if, in order that you may hear Sermons with Profit and Advantage, I

Firſt, direct or intreat you to come to hear them, not out of Curioſity, but from a ſincere Deſire to know and do your Duty.

Formality and Hypocriſy in any religious Exerciſe is an Abomination unto the Lord. And to enter his Houſe merely to have our Ears entertained, and not our Hearts reformed, muſt certainly be highly diſpleaſing to the Moſt High God, as well as unprofitable to ourſelves.

Hence it is, that ſo many remain Unconverted, yea, Unaffected with the moſt Evangelical Preaching; ſo that like St. *Paul*'s Companions, they only hear the Preacher's Voice with their outward Ears, but do not experience the Power of it inwardly in their Hearts. Or like the Ground near *Gideon*'s Fleece, they remain untouched; whilſt others that came to be fed with the ſincere Milk of the Word, like the

Fleece

Fleece itſelf, are watered by the Dew of God's Heavenly Bleſſing, and grow thereby.

Flee therefore, my Brethren, flee Curioſity; and prepare your Hearts by a humble Diſpoſition to receive with Meekneſs the engrafted Word, and then it will be a Means, under God, to quicken, build up, purify, and ſave your Souls.

A *Second* Direction I ſhall lay down for the ſame Purpoſe, is, not only to prepare your Hearts before you hear, but alſo to give diligent heed to the Things that are ſpoken, whilſt you are hearing the Word of God.

If an earthly King was to iſſue out a Royal Proclamation, on performing or not performing the Conditions wherein contained the Life or Death of his Subjects entirely depended, how ſollicitous would they be to hear what thoſe Conditions were? And ſhall not we pay the ſame Reſpect to the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and lend an attentive Ear to his Ambaſſadors, when they are declaring in his Name on what Terms our Pardon, Peace, and Happineſs may be ſecured?

When God deſcended on Mount *Sinai* in terrible Majeſty, to give unto his People the Law, how attentive were they to his Servant *Moſes*? And if they were ſo earneſt to hear the Thundrings or Threatnings of the Law, ſhall not we be as ſollicitous to hear from the Miniſters of *Chriſt*, the glad Tidings of the Goſpel?

Whilſt *Chriſt* was himſelf on Earth, it is ſaid, that the People hung upon him to hear the gracious Words that proceeded out of his Mouth. And if we looked on Miniſters as we ought, as the Repreſentatives of *Jeſus Chriſt*,

we ſhould hang upon them to hear their Words alſo.

Beſides, the ſacred Truths that Goſpel Miniſters deliver are not dry inſipid Lectures on Moral Philoſophy, intended only to amuſe us for a while; but the great Myſteries of Godlineſs, which therefore we are bound ſtudiouſly to liſten to, leſt through our Negligence we ſhould either not underſtand them, or by any other Means let them ſlip.

But how regardleſs are thoſe of this Direction, who inſtead of hanging on the Preacher to hear him, doze or ſleep whilſt he is ſpeaking to them from God? Unhappy Men! Can they not watch with our bleſſed Lord one Hour? What; Have they never read how *Eutichus* fell down as he was ſleeping, when St. *Paul* continued his Diſcourſe till Midnight, and was taken up dead?

But to return. Though you may prepare your Hearts, as you may think, by a teachable Diſpoſition, and be attentive whilſt Diſcourſes are delivering, yet this will profit you little, unleſs you obſerve a

Third Direction — not to entertain any the leaſt Prejudice againſt the Miniſter.

For could a Preacher ſpeak with the Tongue of Men and Angels, if his Audience was prejudiced againſt him, he would be but as a ſounding Braſs, or a tinkling Cymbal.

That was the Reaſon why *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, the eternal Word, could not do many mighty Works, nor preach to any great Effect among thoſe of his own Country; for they were offended at him. And was this ſame *Jeſus*, this,

this God Incarnate again to bow the Heavens, and to come down ſpeaking as never Man ſpake; yet if we were prejudiced againſt him, as the *Jews* were, we ſhould harden our Hearts as the *Jews* did theirs.

Take heed therefore, my Brethren, and beware of entertaining any Diſlike againſt thoſe whom the Holy Ghoſt has made Overſeers over you. Conſider that the Clergy are Men of like Paſſions with yourſelves. And though we ſhould even hear a Perſon teaching others to do, what he has not taught himſelf; yet that is no ſufficient Reaſon for rejecting his Doctrine. For Miniſters ſpeak not in their own, but *Chriſt*'s Name. And we know who commanded the People to do whatſoever the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſhould ſay unto them, though they ſaid but did not.

But, *Fourthly*, as you ought not be prejudiced againſt, ſo you ſhould be careful not to depend too much on a Preacher, or think more highly of him than you ought to think. For though this be an Extreme that People ſeldom run into; yet preferring one Teacher, in Oppoſition to another, has often been of ill Conſequence to the Church of God.

That, we read, was a Fault which the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* condemned in the *Corinthians*: For whereas one ſaid, I am of *Paul*; another, I am of *Apollos*: Are ye not Carnal, ſays he? For who is *Paul*, and who is *Apollos*, but Inſtruments in God's Hands by whom you believed? And are not all Miniſters ſent forth to be miniſtring Ambaſſadors to thoſe who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation? And are they not all there-

fore greatly to be eſteemed for their Work's Sake?

The Apoſtle, it is true, commands us to pay double Honour to thoſe who labour in the Word and Doctrine. But then to prefer one Miniſter at the Expence of another (perhaps to ſuch a Degree, as when you have actually entered a Church, to come out again, becauſe he does not preach) is earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh.

Not to mention that Popularity and Applauſe cannot but be exceeding dangerous even to a rightly informed Mind; and muſt neceſſarily fill any thinking Man with a holy Jealouſy, leſt he ſhould take that Honour to himſelf, which is due only to God; who alone qualifies him for his Miniſterial Labours, and from whom alone every good and perfect Gift cometh.

A *Fifth* Direction I would recommend is, to make a particular Application of every Thing that is delivered to your own Hearts.

When our Saviour was diſcourſing at his laſt Supper with his beloved Diſciples, and foretld that one of them ſhould betray him, each of them immediately applied it to his own Heart, and ſaid, *Lord, Is it I?* And would Perſons in like Manner, when Preachers are diſſuading from any Vice, or perſuading to any Virtue, inſtead of crying, this was deſigned againſt ſuch and ſuch a one, turn their Thoughts inwardly, and ſay, *Lord, Is it I?* How far more beneficial ſhould we find Diſcourſes to be, than they generally are now?

But we are apt to wander too much abroad: Always looking at the Mote which is in our Neigh-

Neighbour's Eye, rather than the Beam which is in our own.

Haſte we now to the *Sixth* and laſt Direction: If you would receive a Bleſſing from the Lord, when you hear his Word preached, pray to him, both before, in, and after every Sermon, to endue the Miniſter with Power to ſpeak, and to grant you a Will and Ability to put in Practice what he ſhall ſhew from the Book of God to be your Duty.

This would be an excellent Means to render the Word preached effectual to the Enlightening and Enflaming your Hearts, and without this all the other Means before preſcribed will be in vain.

No doubt it was this Conſideration that made St. *Paul* ſo earneſtly intreat his Beloved *Epheſians* to intercede with God for him——*Praying always*, ſays he, *with all Manner of Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit; and for Me alſo that I may open my Mouth with Boldneſs, to make known the Myſteries of the Goſpel.* And if ſo great an Apoſtle as St. *Paul* needed the Prayers of his People, much more do thoſe Miniſters, who have only the ordinary Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Beſides, this would be a good Proof that you ſincerely deſired to do as well as know the Will of God: And it muſt highly profit both Miniſters and People; becauſe God through your Prayers will give them a double Portion of his Holy Spirit, whereby they will be enabled to inſtruct you more fully in the Things which pertain to the Kingdom of God.

And oh! that all that hear me this Day would ſeriouſly apply their Hearts to practiſe what has now been told them!—How would Miniſters ſee Satan like Lightning fall from Heaven, and People find the Word preached ſharper than a two-edged Sword, and mighty through God to the pulling down of the Devil's ſtrong Holds!

The Holy Ghoſt would then fall on all them that heard the Word; as when St. *Peter* preached. The Goſpel of *Chriſt* would have free Courſe, run very ſwiftly, and Thouſands again be converted by a Sermon.

For *Jeſus Chriſt* is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever. He has promiſed to be with his Miniſters always, even unto the End of the World. And the Reaſon why we do not receive larger Effuſions of the bleſſed Spirit of God, is not, becauſe our All-powerfull Redeemer's Hand is ſhortened, but becauſe we are not prepared to receive them, and becauſe we do not expect them, but confine them to the Primitive Times.

It does indeed ſometimes happen that God to magnify his Free Grace in *Chriſt Jeſus*, is found of them that ſought him not; a notorious Sinner is forcibly worked upon by a publick Sermon, and plucked as a Fire-brand out of the Fire. But this is not God's ordinary Way of acting. No; for the Generality, He only viſits thoſe with the Power of his Word, who humbly wait to know what He would have them to do. And ſends unqualified Hearers not only empty, but hardened, away.

Take heed, therefore, ye careleſs, curious Profeſſors, if any ſuch be here preſent, how you hear. Remember that, whether we think of it

or,

or not, we muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of *Chriſt*, where Miniſters muſt give a ſtrict Account of the Doctrine they have delivered, and you as ſtrict a one, how you have improved under it. And good God! how will you be able to ſtand at the Bar of an angry, Sin-avenging Judge, and ſee ſo many Diſcourſes you have deſpiſed, ſo many Miniſters who once longed and laboured for the Salvation of your precious and immortal Souls, brought out as ſo many ſwift Witneſſes againſt you? Will it be ſufficient then, think you, to alledge that you went to hear them only out of Curioſity, to paſs away an idle Hour, to admire the Oratory, or ridicule the Simplicity of the Preacher? No, God will then let you know, that you ought to have come out of better Principles, that every Sermon has been put down to your Account, and and that you muſt then be juſtly puniſhed for not improving by them.

But fear not, you little Flock, who with Meekneſs receive the ingrafted Word, and bring forth the peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs; for it ſhall not be ſo with you. No; you will be your Miniſter's Joy, and their Crown of Rejoycing in the Day of our Lord *Jeſus*. And they will preſent you in a holy Triumph faultleſs and unblameable to our common Redeemer, ſaying, Behold us, O Lord, and the Children which Thou haſt given us.

But ſtill *take you heed how you hear*. For upon your improving the Grace you have, more ſhall be given, and you ſhall have abundance. For He is faithful that has promiſed, Who alſo will do it. Nay, God from out of *Sion* ſhall ſo bleſs you, that every Sermon you hear ſhall com-

communicate to you a freſh Supply of Spiritual Knowledge. The Word of God ſhall dwell in you richly; you ſhall go on from Strength to Strength, from one Degree of Grace unto another, till being grown up to be perfect Men in *Chriſt Jeſus*, and filled with all the Fulneſs of God, you ſhall be tranſlated by Death to ſee Him as He is, and to ſing Praiſe before his Throne with Angels and Archangels, Cherubims and Seraphims, and the general Aſſembly of the Firſt-born, whoſe Names are written in Heaven, for ever and ever.

Which God, &c.

SERMON

SERMON II.

Wordly Buſineſs no Plea for the Neglect of RELIGION.

MATT. viii. 22.

Let the Dead bury their Dead.

ST. *Paul* preaching at *Athens*, tells them, that as he paſſed by and beheld their Devotions, he perceived they were *in all Things too ſuperſtitious*. But was this Apoſtle to riſe, and come publiſhing the Glad Tidings of Salvation in any of our populous Cities, he would ſee no Reaſon why he ſhould charge the Inhabitants with this; but rather, as he paſſed by and obſerved the Tenor of their Life, ſay, I perceive in all Things ye are too Worldly minded; ye are too eagerly bent on purſuing your lawful Buſineſs; ſo eagerly, as either wholly to neglect, or at leaſt too heedleſly to attend on *the one Thing needful*.

There cannot then be a greater Charity ſhewn to the Chriſtian World, than to ſound an Alarm in

in their Ears, and to warn them of the inexpreſſible Danger of continually graſping after the Things of this Life, without being equally, nay a thouſand times more concerned for their Well-being in a future State.

And there is ſtill the more Occaſion for ſuch an Alarm, becauſe Worldly-mindedneſs ſo eaſily and craftily beſets the Hearts of Men. For out of a ſpecious Pretence of ſerving God in labouring for the Meat which periſheth, they are inſenſibly lulled into ſuch a ſpiritual Slumber, as ſcarce to perceive their Neglect to ſecure that which endureth to everlaſting Life.

The Words of the Text, if not at firſt View, yet when examined and explained, will be found applicable to this Caſe, as containing an admirable Caution not to purſue the Affairs of this World at the Expence of our Happineſs in the next.

They are Words of *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf: The Occaſion of their being ſpoken was this,—As he was converſing with thoſe that were gathered round about him, he gave one of them an immediate Summons to follow him: But he, either afraid to go after ſuch a perſecuted Maſter, or rather loving this preſent World, ſays, *Suffer me firſt to go home and bury my Father*, or, as moſt explain it, *Let me firſt go and diſpatch ſome important Buſineſs I have now in Hand.* But *Jeſus* ſaid unto him, *Let the Dead bury their Dead*; Leave Worldly Buſineſs to Worldly Men, let thy ſecular Buſineſs be left undone, rather than thou ſhouldſt neglect to follow me.

Whether this Perſon did as he was commanded, I know not; but this I know,—That what *Chriſt* ſaid here in Perſon, he has often whiſpered

whiſpered with the ſmall ſtill Voice of his *Holy Spirit*, and ſaid to many here preſent, that riſe up early and late, take Reſt and eat the Bread of Careſulneſs, Come draw off your Affections from the Things of this Life; take up your Croſs and follow me. But they willing to juſtify themſelves, make Anſwer, *Lord ſuffer us firſt to bury our Fathers*, to diſpatch our ſecular Affair.—I ſay unto all ſuch *Let the Deaa bury their Dead*, let your Worldly Buſineſs be left undone rather than you ſhould neglect to follow him.

From the Words thus explained naturally ariſes this Propoſition,——That no Buſineſs, though never ſo important, can juſtify a Neglect of true Religion:

The Truth of which I ſhall firſt ſhew,
And then make an Application of it.

I. *Firſt* then, I am to prove that no temporal Buſineſs, though never ſo important, can juſtify a Neglect of *true Religion.*

By the Word *Religion* I do not mean any Set of moral Virtues, any partial Amendment of ourſelves, or formal Attendance on any outward Duties whatſoever: but a thorough real Change of Nature wrought in us by the inviſible, yet powerful Operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*, preſerved and nouriſhed in our Souls by a conſtant Uſe of all the Means of Grace, evidenced by a good Life, and bringing forth the Fruits of the Spirit.

This is the true and undefiled Religion, and for the perfecting this good Work in our Hearts, the eternal Son God came down and

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ſhed his precious Blood; for this End were we made, and ſent into the World, and by this alone can we become the Sons of God. Were we indeed to judge by the common Practice of the World, we might think we were ſent into it for no other Purpoſe than to care and toil for the uncertain Riches of this Life: But if we conſult the lively Oracles, they will inform us, that we were born for nobler Ends—to be born again from above——to be reſtored to the Divine Likeneſs by Jeſus Chriſt our Second *Adam*, and thereby be made meet to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven; and conſequently, there is an Obligation laid upon all, even the moſt buſy People, to ſecure this End; it being an undeniable Truth, that all Creatures ought to anſwer the End for which they were created.

Some indeed are for confining Religion to the Clergy, and think it only belongs to thoſe who ſerve at the Altar: But what a fatal Miſtake is this, ſeeing all Perſons are indifferently called by God to the ſame State of inward Holineſs? As we are all corrupt in our Nature, ſo muſt we all be renewed and ſanctified. And tho' it muſt be granted, that the Clergy lye under double Obligations to be Examples to Believers in Faith, Zeal, Charity, and whatever elſe is commendable and of good Report, as being more immediately dedicated to the Service of God; yet as we have been all baptized with one Babtiſm into the Death of Chriſt, we are all under a Neceſſity of performing our Baptiſmal Covenant, and perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God: For the Holy Scriptures point out to us but one Way

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of Admiſſion into the Kingdom of Chriſt,—— thro' the narrow Gate of a ſound Converſion: And he that does not enter into the Sheepfold, whether Clergy or Layman, by this Door, will find to his everlaſting Confuſion, there is no climbing up another Way.

Beſides, what a groſs Ignorance of the Nature of *true Religion*, as well as of our own Happineſs, does ſuch a Diſtinction diſcover? For what does our Saviour by willing us to be religious require of us, but to ſubdue our corrupt Paſſions, to root out ill Habits, to engraft the Heavenly Graces of God's moſt Holy Spirit in their room; and, in one Word, to fill us with all the Fulneſs of God?

And will Men be ſo much their own Enemies, as to affirm this belongs only to thoſe who miniſter in holy Things; Does it not euqally concern the moſt active Man living? Is it the End of Religion to make Men happy, and is it not every one's Privilege to be as happy, as he can? Do Perſons in Buſineſs find the Corruptions of their Nature, and Diſorder of their Paſſions ſo pleaſing, that they care not whether they ever regulate or root them out? Or will they conſent that Miniſters ſhall be alone Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light?——If not, as they deſire the ſame End, why will they not make Uſe of the ſame Means? Do they think that God will create a new Thing upon the Earth, and contrary to the Purity of his Nature, and Immutability of his Counſel, admit them into Heaven in their natural State, becauſe they have been encumbred about many worldly Things? Search the Scriptures, and ſee if they give any Room for ſuch a groundleſs Hope. But

But farther, one would imagine there was ſomething of the higheſt Concern and utmoſt Importance in our temporal Affairs, that they ſhould divert ſo many from purifying their Hearts by Faith which is in *Chriſt Jeſus.*

A covetous Miſer, who neglects Religion by being continually intent on ſeeking great Things for himſelf and thoſe of his own Houſhold, flatters himſelf he herein acts moſt wiſely, and at the ſame Time will cenſure and condemn a young Prodigal, who has no Time to be devout, becauſe he is ſo perpetually engaged in waſting his Subſtance by riotous Living and following of Harlots. But yet a little while, and Men will be convinced, that they are as much without Excuſe who loſe their Souls by hunting after Riches, as thoſe who loſe them by hunting after ſenſual Pleaſures. For though Buſineſs may aſſume an Air of Importance, when compared with other trifling Amuſements, yet when put in the Balance with the Loſs of our precious and immortal Souls, it is equally frivolous,—— According to that of our Saviour, *What ſhall it profit a Man, if he ſhall gain the whole World and loſe his own Soul; or what ſhall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?*

And now what need we any farther Proof? We have heard the Deciſion out of *Chriſt*'s own Mouth. But becauſe it is difficult to convince them of this important Truth, whoſe Hearts are blinded by the Deceitfulneſs of Riches, ſo that we had need cry out to them in the Language of the Prophet, *O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the Lord.* I ſhall lay before you one Paſſage of Scripture more, which I could wiſh were written on the Tables of all

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our Hearts. In the xivth of St. *Luke* the 18th and following Verſes, our Bleſſed Lord puts forth this Parable,——*A certain Man made a great Supper, and bad many, and ſent his Servant at Supper Time to call them that were bidden: But they all, with one Conſent, began to make Excuſe. The one ſaid, I have bought a Piece of Ground, and I muſt needs go ſee it, I pray thee have me excuſed. And another ſaid, I have bought a Yoke of Oxen, and I muſt needs go and prove them, I pray thee therefore have me excuſed. So the Servant returned, and ſhewed his Maſter all theſe Things.*—And what follows? Did the Maſter accept of their Excuſes? No, the Text tells us the Good Man was angry, and ſaid, that *none of thoſe which were bidden, ſhould taſte of his Supper.* And what does this Parable teach more or leſs, than that the moſt lawful Callings cannot juſtify our Neglect, nay, that they are no longer lawful when they in any wiſe interfere with the great Concerns of Religion? For the Marriage Supper here ſpoken of, means the Goſpel; the Maſter of the Houſe is *Chriſt*; the Servants ſent out, are his Miniſters, whoſe Duty it is from Time to Time to call the People to this Marriage Feaſt, or, in other Words, to be religious. Now we find thoſe thas were bidden, were very well and honeſtly employed. There was no Harm in buying or ſeeing a Piece of Ground, or in going to prove a Yoke of Oxen; but here lay their Fault,—They were doing theſe Things when they were invited to come to the Marriage Feaſt.

Without doubt, Perſons may very honeſtly and commendably be employed in following their reſpective Callings; but yet, if they are engaged

engaged ſo deeply in theſe, as to hinder their working out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling, they muſt expect the ſame Sentence with their Predeceſſors in the Parable, that none of them ſhall taſte of *Chriſt*'s Supper; for our particular Calling, as of this or that Profeſſion, muſt never interfere with our general and precious Calling as we are Chriſtians. Not that Chriſtianity calls us intirely out of the World, the Holy Scriptures warrant no ſuch Doctrine.

It is very remarkable, that in the *Book of Life*, we find ſome almoſt of all kinds of Occupations, who notwithſtanding ſerved God in their reſpective Generations, and ſhone as ſo many Lights in the World. Thus we hear of a good *Centurion* in the *Evangeliſts*, and a Devout *Cornelius* in the *Acts*; a Pious Lawyer, and ſome that walked with God, even of *Nero*'s Houſhold in the *Epiſtles*; and our Divine Maſter himſelf in his Check to *Martha* does not condemn her for minding, but for being cumbered or perplexed about many Things.

No, you may, nay, you muſt labour, out of Obedience to God, ever for the Meat which periſheth. But then, that I may in the *Second* Place apply what has been ſaid,

I beſeech you, by the Mercies of God, in *Chriſt Jeſus*, let it not be at the Expence of that which endureth to everlaſting Life: for, to repeat our Bleſſed Saviour's Words, *What ſhall it profit a Man, if he ſhall gain the whole World and loſe his own Soul; or, What ſhall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?*

Were we always to live in the World, then worldly Wiſdom would be our higheſt Wiſdom: But

But foraſmuch as we have here no continuing City, and were only ſent into this World to have our Natures changed, and to fit ourſelves for that which is to come; then to neglect this important Work for a little worldly Gain, what is it but with profane *Eſau*, to *ſell* our *Birthright for a Meſs of Pottage.*

Alas! how unlike are Chriſtians to Chriſtianity, they are commanded to *ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, and all* other real Neceſſaries *ſhall be added unto them*; but they are fearful *(O Men of little Faith)* if they ſhould do ſo, all other Neceſſaries would be taken from them: They are ſtrictly forbidden to be careful for the Morrow, and yet they reſt not Night or Day, but are continually heaping up Riches for many Years, tho' they know not who ſhall gather them. Is this acting like Perſons that are Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth? Is this keeping their Baptiſmal Vow? Or rather, Is it not directly apoſtatizing from it, and deſerting the Service of *Jeſus Chriſt*, to liſt themſelves under the Banner of *Mammon?*

But what will be the Hope of ſuch Worldlings, when God ſhall take away their Souls? What if the Almighty ſhould ſay to each of them, as he did to the rich Fool in the Goſpel, *This Night ſhall thy Soul be required of thee*; Oh then, what would all thoſe Things profit them, which they are now ſo buſy in providing?

Was Eternal Life, that free Gift of God in *Chriſt Jeſus*, to be purchaſed with Money; or could Men carry their Stocks beyond the Grave to buy Oyl for their Lamps, *i. e.* Grace for their

their Hearts, when they ſhould be call'd to meet the Bridegroom, there might be ſome Reaſon why God might well bear with them: But ſince their Money is to periſh with them; ſince it is certain, as they brought nothing into the World, ſo they can carry nothing out; or ſuppoſing they could, ſince there is no Oyl to be bought, *i. e.* no Grace to be purchaſed when once the Lamp of their natural Life is gone out; Would it not be much more prudent to ſpend the ſhort Time they have here allotted them in buying Oyl while it may be had. and not for Fear of having a little leſs of that which will quickly be another Man's, eternally loſe the true Riches?

What think you? Is it to be ſuppoſed that it grieved that covetous Worldling before mentioned, when his Soul ſprung into the World of Spirits, that he could not ſtay here till he had pulled down his Barns and built greater? Or think you not that all Things here below ſeemed equally little to him then, and he only repented that he had not employed more Time in pulling down every high Thought that exalted itſelf againſt the Almighty, and building up his Soul in the Knowledge and Fear of God?

And thus it will be with all unhappy Men, who like him are diſquieting themſelves in a vain Purſuit after worldly Riches, and at the ſame Time are not rich towards God.

They may, for a Seaſon, ſeem excellently well employed in being ſolliciouſly careful about the important Concerns of this Life; but when once their Eyes are opened by Death, and their Souls launched into Eternity, they will then

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ſee the Littleneſs of all ſublunary Cares, and and wonder they ſhould be ſo beſotted to the Things of another Life, while they were, it may be, applauded for their great Wiſdom and profound Sagacity in the Affairs of this World.

Alas! how will they bemoan themſelves for acting like the unjuſt Steward ſo very wiſely in their temporal Concerns, in calling their reſpective Creditors ſo carefully, aud asking how much every one owes to them, and yet never remembring to call themſelves to an Account, or enquire how much they owed their own Great Lord and Maſter?.

And now what ſhould I ſay more? The God of this World, and the inordinate Deſire of other Things muſt have wholly ſtifled the Conſcience of that Man, who does not ſee the Force of theſe plain Reaſonings.

Permit me only to add a Word or two to the Rich, and Perſons that are freed from the Buſineſs of this Life.

But here I muſt pauſe awhile, for I am ſenſible that it is but an ungrateful, and, as ſome may imagine, an aſſuming Thing, for ſuch a Novice in Religion to take upon him to inſtruct Men in high Stations, and who perhaps would diſdain to ſet me with the Dogs of their Flock.

But however, ſince St. *Paul*, who knew what beſt became a young Preacher, commanded *Timothy*, young as he was, to exhort and charge the Rich with all Authority. I hope none here that are ſo will be offended, if with Humility I beg Leave to remind them, tho' they once knew, that if Perſons in the moſt buſy

Employs are indiſpenſably obliged to *work out their Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, much more ought they to do ſo, who are free from the Toils and Incumbrance of a lower Way of Life, and conſequently have greater Opportunities and Leiſure to prepare themſelves for a future State.

But is this really the Caſe, or do we not find by fatal Experience that too many of thoſe whom God has exalted above their Brethren, who are *cloathed in Purple and fine Linen and fare ſumptuouſly every Day*, by a ſad Abuſe of God's great Bounty towards them, think that their Stations ſet them above Religion, and ſo let the Poor who live by the Sweat of their Brows attend more conſtantly on the Means of Grace than they.

But woe unto ſuch rich Men! for they have received their Conſolation. Happy had it been if they had never been born: For if the careleſs irreligious Tradeſman cannot be ſaved, where will the luxurious and wicked Gentlemen appear?—

Let me therefore, by way of Concluſion, exhort all Perſons, High and Low, Rich and Poor, one with another, to make the Renewal of their fallen Nature the one Buſineſs of their Lives; and to let no worldly Profit, no worldly Pleaſure divert them from the Thoughts of it. Let this Cry, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh*, be ever ſounding in our Ears; and let us live as Creatures that are every Moment liable to be hurried away by Death to Judgment: Let us remember that this Life is a State of infinite Importance, a Point between two Eternities, and that after theſe few Days are ended, there will

will remain no more Sacrifice for Sin; let us be often asking ourſelves, How we ſhall wiſh we had lived when we leave the World? And then we ſhall always live in ſuch a State as we ſhall never fear to die in. So that whether we live, we ſhall live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we ſhall die unto the Lord; ſo that living or dying we may be the Lord's.

To which End, Let us beſeech God, the Protector of all them that put their Truſt in him, without whom nothing is ſtrong, nothing is holy to increaſe and multiply upon his Mercy, that he being our Ruler and Guide, we may ſo paſs through Things Temporal, that we finally loſe not the Things Eternal; through *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Lord.

SERMON III.

The MARKS of the NEW BIRTH.

ACTS xix. 5.

Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed?

TWO Conſtructions have been given us of theſe Words; ſome have ſuppoſed, that the Queſtion here put, is, Whether theſe Diſciples, whom St. *Paul* found at *Epheſus*, after he had paſſed through the upper Coaſts, had received the Holy Ghoſt, by Impoſition of Hands at Confirmation.——Others think, that theſe Diſciples had been already baptiſed into *John*'s Baptiſm; but that not being attended with an immediate Effuſion of the Holy Spirit, the Apoſtle here asks them, *Whether they had received the Holy Ghoſt by being baptiſed into Jeſus Chriſt?* And upon their anſwering in the Negative, he firſt baptiſed, and then confirmed them in the Name of the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Which

Which of these Interpretations is most true, is is neither easy nor very necessary to determine. However, as the Words contain a most important Enquiry, without any Reference to the Context, I shall from them draw these two General Heads of Discourse.

I. *First*, I shall shew who the Holy Ghost, here spoken of, is; and how we must all receive him before we can be stiled *True Believers*.

II. *Secondly*, I shall lay down some Scripture Marks, whereby we may know, *Whether we have thus received the Holy Ghost, or not*.

III. *Thirdly*, By Way of Conclusion, I shall address myself to several distinct Classes of Professors, concerning the Doctrine that shall have been delivered.

I. And *First*, I am to shew who the Holy Ghost, spoken of in the Text is; and how we must all receive him ere we can be stiled *True Believers*.

By the Holy Ghost here spoken of, is signified the Holy Spirit,—the third Person in the ever blessed Trinity,—consubstantial and coeternal with the Father and the Son,—proceeding from, yet equal to them both.—He is emphatically called *Holy*, because infinitely Holy in himself, and the Author and Finisher of all Holiness in us.

This blessed Spirit, who once moved on the Face of the great Deep, who overshadowed the Blessed Virgin before that Holy Thing was born

of her, who deſcended in a bodily Shape like a Dove on our Bleſſed Lord, when he came up out of the Water at his Baptiſm; and lighted afterwards in fiery Tongues on the Heads of all his Apoſtles at the Day of *Pentecoſt*; this is the Holy Ghoſt, who muſt move on the Faces of our Souls; this Power of the Moſt High muſt come upon us, and we muſt be baptiſed with his Baptiſm and refining Fire, before we can be ſtiled True Members of its myſtical Body.

Thus ſays the Apoſtle, *Know ye not that Chriſt is in you?* that is, by his Spirit, *unleſs you are Reprobates?* Now if any Man hath not the Spirit of *Chriſt*, he is none of his.—And again, ſays St. *John*, *We know that we are his by the Spirit that he hath given us.*

It is not indeed neceſſary that we ſhould have it now given in that miraculous Manner in which it was at firſt given to our Lord's Apoſtles, by Signs and Wonders.——But it is abſolutely neceſſary that we ſhould receive the Holy Ghoſt in his ſanctifying Graces as really as they did, and ſo will it continue to be till the End of the World.

For thus ſtands the Caſe between God and Man.—God at firſt made Man upright, or as the ſacred Penman expreſſes it, *In the Image of God made he Man*, that is, his Soul was the very Copy, the Tranſcript of the Divine Nature.—He that before had by his Almighty Fiat ſpoke the World into Being, breatheth into Man the Breath of ſpiritual Life, and his Soul became adorned with all the Perfections of the Deity.—This was the finiſhing Stroke of the Creation: The Perfection both of the moral and material World,—and ſo near reſembled its Divine

Divine Original, that God could not but rejoyce, and take Pleaſure in his own Likeneſs.—And therefore we read, that when God had finiſhed the inanimate and brutiſh Part of the Creation, he looked upon it, and behold it was *Good*; but when that lovely Godlike Creature, *Man*, was made, behold it was *very Good*.

Happy then, unſpeakably happy muſt Man needs be, who was thus Partaker of the Divine Nature; and thus might we have ſtill continued, had he ſtill continued Holy.—But God had placed him in a State of Probation, with a free Grant to eat of every Tree in the Garden of *Eden*, except the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.—The Day he did eat thereof he was ſurely to die; that is, not only to be ſubject to temporal, but ſpiritual Death, and conſequently to loſe that Divine Image, that ſpiritual Life God had not long ſince breathed into him, and which was as much his Happineſs as his Glory.

Theſe, one would imagine, were eaſy Conditions for a finite Creature's Happineſs to depend on. But Man, unhappy Man, being ſeduced by the Devil, and deſiring, like him, to be equal with his Maker, eat of the forbidden Fruit, and thereby became liable to that Curſe which the Eternal God, who cannot lie, had denounced againſt his Diſobedience.

Accordingly we read, that ſoon after *Adam* had fallen, he complained that he was naked.—Naked not only as to his Body, but Naked and left deſtitute of thoſe Divine Graces, which before decked and beautified his Soul.—The unhappy Mutiny and Diſorder which the viſible Creation fell into, thoſe Briars and Thorns which now ſprung up and overſpread the Earth, were but

poor Emblems, but lifeleſs Repreſentations of that Confuſion and Rebellion, thoſe divers Luſts and Paſſions which ſprung up in, and quite overwhelmed the Soul of Man immediately after the Fall.--Alas! he was now no longer the Image of the inviſible God; but as he had imitated the Devil's Sin, he became Partaker of the Devil's Nature, and from an Union with, ſunk into a State of direct Enmity againſt God.

Now in this dreadful diſordered Condition are all of us brought into the World.----For as the Root is, ſuch muſt the Branches be.--Accordingly we are told, that *Adam* begat a Son in his own Likeneſs, that is, with the ſame corrupt Nature which he himſelf had ſunk into after he had eaten the forbidden Fruit. And Experience, as well as Scripture proves, that we alſo are altogether born in Sin and Corruption, and therefore uncapable, whilſt in ſuch a State, to hold Communion with God.---For as Light cannot have Communion with Darkneſs, ſo God can have no Communion with ſuch polluted Sons of *Belial*.

Here then appears the End and Deſign why *Chriſt* was made manifeſt in the Fleſh,----*viz.* to put an End to theſe Diſorders, and to reſtore us to that primitive Dignity in which we were at firſt created.---Accordingly he ſhed his precious Blood to ſatisfy his Father's Juſtice for our Sins, and thereby alſo he purchaſed again for us the Holy Ghoſt, who ſhould once more re-inſtamp the Divine Image upon our Hearts, and make us capable of living with and enjoying God.

This,

This, I ſay, was the only End of our Lord's coming into the World——Nay, this is the only End why the World itſelf is now kept in Being. For as ſoon as a ſufficient Number are ſanctified out of it, the Heavens ſhall be wrapped up like a Scrowl, the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat, the Earth and all that therein is ſhall be burnt up.

This is that new Birth mentioned by our bleſſed Lord to *Nicodemus*, without which we cannot ſee the Kingdom of God. This is what St. *Paul* calls being renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, and herein conſiſts that Holineſs without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord.

In this manner then it is undeniably certain we muſt receive the Holy Ghoſt e'er we can be ſtiled true Members of Chriſt's myſtical Body.

II. I come now, in the *Second* Place, to lay down ſome ſcriptural Marks, whereby we may eaſily judge whether we have received the Holy Ghoſt or not.

And the *Firſt* Mark I ſhall mention is---- our having received a Spirit of Prayer and Supplication: --- For that always accompanies the Spirit of Grace.---No ſooner was *Paul* converted, but behold he prayeth, ſays Jeſus Chriſt. And this was urged as an Argument to convince *Ananias* that he was converted. And God's Elect are ſaid to cry to him Day and Night.

For ſince one great Work of the holy Spirit is to convince us of Sin, and to ſet us upon ſeeking Pardon and renewing Grace thro' the all-ſufficient Merits of a crucified Redeem-

er, whoſoever has felt the Powers of the World to come awakening him from his ſpiritual Lethargy, cannot but be always crying out, Lord what wouldſt thou have me do? Or in the Language of the importunate blind *Bartimeus*, Jeſus, thou Son of *David*, have Mercy upon me.

The bleſſed Jeſus, as he received the Holy Ghoſt without Meaſure, ſo he evidenced it by nothing more than his frequent Addreſſes at the Throne of Grace. Accordingly we read, that he was often alone on the Mountain praying——That he roſe a great while before Day to pray.——Nay, that he ſpent whole Nights in Prayer.——And whoſoever is made Partaker of the ſame Spirit with the Holy Jeſus, will be of the ſame Mind, and delight in nothing ſo much as to draw nigh unto God, and lift up holy Hands and Hearts in fervent and devout Prayer.

It muſt be confeſſed indeed that this Spirit of Supplication is often as it were ſenſibly loſt, and decays for ſome Time even in thoſe who have actually received the Holy Ghoſt. And they, through ſpiritual Dryneſs and Barrenneſs of Soul, find in themſelves a Liſtleſsneſs and Backwardneſs to this Duty of Prayer;——but then they take it as their Croſs, and ſtill perſevere in ſeeking Jeſus tho' it be ſorrowing. And their Hearts notwithſtanding are fixed upon God, tho' they cannot exert their Affections ſo ſtrongly as uſual, on Account of that ſpiritual Deadneſs which God for wiſe Reaſons has ſuffered to benumb their Souls.

But

But as for the formal Believer, it is not ſo with him. No, he either prays not at all, or if he does enter into his Cloſet, it is with Reluctance—out of Cuſtom——or to ſatisfy the Checks of his Conſcience——Whereas the true Believer can no more live without Prayer, than without Food Day by Day. And he finds his Soul as really and perceptibly fed by the one, as his Body is nouriſhed and ſupported by the other.

A Second Scripture Mark of our having received the Holy Ghoſt is——not committing Sin.—

Whoſoever is born of God, ſays St. *John*, *ſinneth not, neither can he ſin becauſe his Seed remaineth in him*——Neither can he ſin——This Expreſſion does not imply the Impoſſibility of a ſpiritual Man's ſinning. For we are told, that in many Things we offend all. It means only thus much; that a Man that is really born again of God, doth not wilfully commit Sin, much leſs live in the habitual Practice of it. For how ſhall he that is dead to Sin, as every converted Perſon is, live any longer therein?

'Tis true, a Man that is born again of God may, thro' Surprize or Violence of a Temptation, fall into an Act of Sin: Witneſs the Adultery of *David*, and *Peter*'s Denial of his Maſter. But then, like them, he quickly riſes again, goes out from the World, and weeps bitterly; waſhes the Guilt of Sin away by the Tears of a ſincere Repentance, joined with Faith in the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt; takes

double Heed to his Ways for the future, and perfects Holineſs in the Fear of God.

The Meaning of this Expreſſion of the Apoſtle, that a Man that is born again of God, cannot commit Sin, has been * fitly illuſtrated in the Example of a covetous Worldling, to the general Bent of whoſe Inclinations, Liberality and Profuſeneſs are directly oppoſite. But if, upon ſome unexpected ſudden Occaſion, he does play the Prodigal, he immediately repents him of his Fault, and returns with double Care to his Savingneſs again.---And ſo is every one that is born again. To commit Sin is as contrary to the habitual Frame and Tendency of his Mind, as Generoſity is to the Inclinations of a Miſer. But if at any Time he is drawn into Sin, he immediately with double Zeal returns to his Duty, and brings forth Fruits meet for Repentance.

Whereas the unconverted Sinner is quite dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins,-----or if he does abſtain from the groſs Acts of it, from worldly ſelfiſh Motives, yet there is ſome Right Eye he will not pluck out; ſome Right Hand which he will not cut off; ſome ſpecious *Agag* that he will not ſacrifice for God; and thereby he is convinced, that he is but a mere *Saul*; and conſequently, whatever Pretenſions he may make to the contrary, he has not yet received the Holy Ghoſt.

A *Third* Mark whereby we may know whether or not we have received the Holy Ghoſt is,-----our Conqueſt over the World.-----

For

* Law's *Chriſtian Perfection*.

For *whoever is born of God*, ſays the Apoſtle, *overcometh the World.*--------By the World we are to underſtand, as St. *John* expreſſes it, all that is in the World, the Luſt of the Eye, the Luſt of the Fleſh, and Pride of Life. -----And by overcoming of it is meant our renouncing theſe, ſo as not to follow or be led by them.---For whoſoever is born from above, has his Affections ſet on Things above: He feels a Divine Attraction in his Soul, which forcibly draws his Mind Heavenwards; and as the Heart panteth after the Water-Brooks, ſo doth it make his Soul to long after the Enjoyment of his God.

Not that he is ſo taken up with the Affairs of another Life, as to neglect the Buſineſs of this. No, a truly ſpiritual Man dares not ſtand any Day idle: But then he takes Care, though he laboureth for the Meat which periſheth, firſt to ſecure that which endureth to everlaſting Life. Or if God has exalted him above his Brethren, yet, like *Moſes*, *Joſeph*, and *Daniel*, he notwithſtanding looks upon himſelf as a Stranger and Pilgrim upon Earth.---Having received a Principle of new Life, he walks by Faith and not by Sight.---And his Hopes being full of Immortality, he can look on all Things here below as Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.----In ſhort, tho' he is in, yet is not of the World: And as he was made for the Enjoyment of God, ſo nothing but God can ſatisfy his Soul.

The ever Bleſſed *Jeſus* was a perfect Inſtance of overcoming the World. For though he went continually about doing Good, and always lived in a Preſs, yet wherever he was, his Converſation tended Heavenwards. In like Manner he

that

that is joined to the Lord in one Spirit, will ſo order his Thoughts, Words, and Actions aright, that he will evidence to all, that his Converſation is in Heaven.

On the contrary, an unconverted Man being of the Earth, is earthy: And having no ſpiritual Eye to diſcern ſpiritual Things, is always ſeeking for Happineſs in this Life, where it never was, will, or can be found. Being not born again from above, he is bowed down by a Spirit of natural Infirmity; the Serpent's Curſe becomes his Choice, and he eats of the Duſt of the Earth all the Days of his Life.

A *Fourth* Scripture Mark of our *New Birth*, or of our having received the Holy Ghoſt is,---our loving one another.

We know, ſays St. *John*, *we are paſſed from Death unto Life, becauſe we love the Brethren.---And by this*, ſays *Jeſus Chriſt*, *ſhall all Men know, that you are my Diſciples, if ye have Love one towards another.*---Love is the fulfilling of the Goſpel, as well as the Law; for God is Love and whoſoever dwelleth in God, dwelleth in Love.

But by this Love we are not to underſtand, a Softneſs and Tenderneſs of meer Nature, or a Love founded on worldly Motives (for this a natural Man may have) but a Love of our Brethren preceeding from a Love towards God, Loving all Men in general, becauſe God loves all Men, and loving good Men in particular, for the Grace we ſee in them, and becauſe they love our Lord *Jeſus* in Sincerity.

This

This is Chriſtian Charity, and that new Commandment which *Chriſt* gave his Diſciples. New not in its Object, but in the Motive and Example whereon it is founded, even *Jeſus Chriſt*. This is that Love which the primitive Chriſtians were ſo renowned for, that it became a Proverb.---*See, how theſe Chriſtians love one another*---And without this Love, though we ſhould give all our Goods to feed the Poor, and our Bodies to be burnt, it would profit us nothing.

Farther, this Love is not confined to any particular Set of Men, but is impartial and Catholick. A Love that embraces God's Image wherever it beholds it, and that delights in nothing ſo much as to ſee *Chriſt*'s Kingdom come.

This is the Love wherewith *Jeſus Chriſt* loved Mankind.---He loved all, even the worſt of Men, as appears by his weeping over the obſtinately Perverſe; but wherever he ſaw the leaſt Appearance of the Divine Likeneſs, that Soul he loved in particular.---Thus we read, that when he heard the young Man ſay, *All theſe Things have I kept from my Youth*, that ſo far he loved him. And when he ſaw any noble Inſtance of Faith, though in a *Centurion*, a *Syrophœnician*, Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, how is he ſaid to marvel at it, as Man, to rejoyce in it, ſpeak of, and commend it?---. So alſo every ſpiritual Diſciple of *Jeſus Chriſt* will cordially embrace all that worſhip God in Spirit and in Truth, howſoever they may differ as to the Appendages of Religion, and Things not eſſentially neceſſary to Salvation.

I confeſs

I confeſs indeed that the Heart of a natural Man is not thus enlarged all at once; and a Perſon may really have received the Holy Ghoſt (as *Peter* no doubt had when he was unwilling to go to *Cornelius*) though he be not arrived to this.---But then we affirm, where a Perſon is truly in *Chriſt*, all Narrowneſs of Spirit decreaſes in him daily; the Partition-Wall of Bigotry and Party Zeal is broken down more and more; and the nearer he comes to Heaven, the more his Heart is enlarged with that Love which there will make no Difference between any People, Nation, or Language, but we ſhall all with one Heart, and one Voice, ſing Praiſes to him that ſitteth upon the Throne for ever.

But I haſten to ſhew a *Fifth*, and that the laſt Scripture Mark of our *New Birth*, that I ſhall at preſent mention,--Loving our Enemies. *I ſay unto you*, ſays *Jeſus Chriſt*, *Love your Enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do Good to thoſe that hate you, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you.*---And this Duty of loving our Enemies is ſo neceſſary, that without it, our Bleſſed Lord tells us, our Righteouſneſs does not exceed the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, nay, or of *Publicans* and Sinners: For if you do Good to them only which do Good to you, what do you more than others? What do you extraordinary? Do not even the *Publicans* the ſame?------And theſe Precepts our Lord confirmed by his own Example, when he wept over the bloody City; when he ſuffered himſelf to be led as a Sheep to the Slaughter; when he made that mild Reply to the Traytor *Judas*, *Judas betrayeſt thou*

thou the Son of God with a Kiſs;—And more eſpecially when in the Agonies and Pangs of Death, he prayed for his very Murderers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

This is the moſt difficult Duty to the natural Man, but whoſoever is made Partaker of that Promiſe of the Father, will find it practicable and eaſy. For if we are born again of God, we muſt be like him; and conſequently delight to be perfect in this Duty of doing Good to our worſt Enemies in the ſame Manner, though not in the ſame Degree, as he is perfect.—And he ſends his Rain on the Evil and the Good; cauſeth his Sun to ſhine on the Juſt and Unjuſt: And herein more eſpecially commendeth his Love towards us, that whilſt we were his Enemies, he ſent forth his Son, born of a Woman, made under the Law, that he might become a Curſe for us.

Many other Marks there are ſcattered up and down the Scriptures, whereby we may know whether or not we have received the Holy Ghoſt. Such as to be carnally minded is Death, but to be ſpiritually minded is Life and Peace.—Now the Fruits of the Spirit are Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Meekneſs, with a Multitude of Texts to the ſame Purpoſe.—But as moſt, if not all of them, are comprehended in the Duties already laid down, I dare affirm, whoſoever, upon an impartial Examination, can find the aforeſaid Marks upon his Soul, may be as certain, as though an Angel was to tell him, that his Pardon is ſealed in Heaven.

And as for my own Part, I had rather ſee theſe Divine Graces, theſe Heavenly Tempers

ſtamped

ſtamped upon my Soul, than to hear an Angel from Heaven ſaying unto me, *Son, be of good cheer, thy Sins be forgiven thee.*

For theſe are infallible Witneſſes; theſe are *Emanuel*, God with and in us; theſe make up that white Stone, which none knoweth, ſaving he who receiveth it; theſe are the Earneſts of the Heavenly Inheritance in our Hearts. In ſhort, theſe are Glory begun, and are that good Thing, that better Part, which, if you continue to ſtir up this Gift of God, neither Men or Devils ſhall ever be able to take from us.

III. I proceed now, as was propoſed, in the *Third* Place, to make an Application of the Doctrine delivered, to ſeveral diſtinct Claſſes of Profeſſors.

And *Firſt*, I ſhall addreſs myſelf to thoſe who are dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins.—And here how could I weep over you, as our Lord wept over *Jeruſalem!* For alas! how diſtant muſt you be from God, what a prodigious Work have you got to finiſh, who inſtead of praying Day and Night, ſeldom or never pray at all! And inſtead of being born again in God, ſo as not to commit Sin, are ſo deeply ſunk into the Nature of Devils as to make a Mock at it. Or inſtead of overcoming the World, ſo as not to follow or be led by it, are continually making Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof. And laſtly, inſtead of being endued with the Godlike Diſpoſitions of loving all Men, even your Enemies, have your Hearts full of Hatred, Malice, and Revenge, and deride thoſe who are ſincere Followers of the lowly *Jeſus*.——But think

think you, O Sinners, that God will admit ſuch polluted Wretches into his Sight? Or, ſhould he admit you, do you imagine you could take any Pleaſure in him? No, Heaven itſelf would be no Heaven to you: The Deviliſh Diſpoſitions which are in your Hearts would render all the ſpiritual Enjoyments of thoſe bleſſed Manſions ineffectual to make you happy. — To qualify you to be bliſsful Partakers of that Heavenly Inheritance with the Saints in Light, there is a Meetneſs required, to attain which ought to be the one Buſineſs of your Lives.

It is true, you, as well as the Righteous, in one Senſe ſhall ſee God (for we muſt all appear before the Judgment Seat of *Chriſt*) but you muſt ſee him once, never to ſee him more. For as you carry about in you the Devil's Image, with Devils you muſt dwell. Being of the ſame Nature, you muſt ſhare the ſame Doom. Repent therefore and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out. See that you receive the Holy Ghoſt before you go hence: For otherwiſe how can you eſcape the Damnation of Hell?

Secondly, I ſhall apply myſelf to thoſe who deceive themſelves with falſe Hopes of Salvation. And becauſe, through the Influence of a good Education, or other providential Reſtraints, they have not run into the ſame Exceſs of Riot with other Men, think they have no Need to receive the Holy Ghoſt, and flatter themſelves that they are really born again.

But

But do you ſhew it by bringing forth the Fruits of the Spirit? Do you pray without ceaſing? Do you not commit Sin? Have you overcome the World? And do you love your Enemies, and all Mankind, in the ſame Manner as *Jeſus Chriſt* loved them?

If theſe Things, Brethren, be in you, and abound, then may you have Confidence towards God: But if not, although you may be civilized, yet you are not converted. No, you are yet in your Sins. The Nature of the old *Adam* ſtill reigneth in your Souls. And unleſs the Nature of the ſecond *Adam* be engrafted in its Room, you can never ſee God.

Think not therefore to dreſs yourſelves up in the Ornaments of a good Nature, and civil Education, and ſay with *Agag*, ſurely the Bitterneſs of Death is paſt. For God's Juſtice notwithſtanding that, like *Samuel*, ſhall hew you to Pieces.—However you may be highly eſteemed in the Sight of Men, yet in the Sight of God you are but like the Apples of *Sodom*, Dunghills covered over with Snow, mere whited Sepulchres, appearing a little beautiful without, but inwardly full of Corruption and of all Uncleanlineſs.—And conſequently will be diſmiſſed at the laſt Day, with a *Verily I know you not.*

But the Word is profitable for Comfort, as well as Correction.

Thirdly, therefore do I addreſs myſelf to thoſe who are under the Drawings of the Father, and are going through the Spirit of Bondage, but not finding the Marks before-mentioned, are ever crying out, *Who ſhall deliver us from the Body of this Death?*

But

But fear not, little Flock; for notwithſtanding your preſent Infant State of Grace, it ſhall be your Father's good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom.

The Grace of God, through *Jeſus Chriſt*, that ſhall deliver you, that ſhall give you what you thirſt after. — He hath promiſed he will alſo do it.—Ye ſhall receive the Spirit of Adoption, that Promiſe of the Father, if you faint not.—Only perſevere in ſeeking it,—and determine to find no Reſt in your Spirit, till you know and feel that you are thus born again from above, and God's Spirit witneſſeth with your Spirits that you are the Children of God.

Fourthly and laſtly, I addreſs myſelf to thoſe who have received the Holy Ghoſt in all its ſanctifying Graces, and almoſt ripe for Glory.

Hail happy Saints! For your Heaven is begun on Earth.—You have already received the firſt Fruits of the Spirit, and are patiently waiting till that bleſſed Change come, when your Harveſt ſhall be compleat.—I ſee and admire you, tho' alas! at ſo great a Diſtance from you.—Your Life, I know, is hid with *Chriſt* in God.—You have Comforts, you have Meat to eat, which a ſinful, carnal, ridiculing World knows nothing of.—*Chriſt*'s Yoke is now become eaſy to you, and his Burden light: You have paſſed through the Pangs of the *New Birth*, and now rejoyce that the Man *Chriſt Jeſus* is ſpiritually formed in your Hearts. You know what it is to dwell in *Chriſt*, and *Chriſt* in you. Like *Jacob*'s Ladder, although your Bodies are on Earth, yet your Souls and Hearts are in Heaven. And by your Faith and conſtant Recollection,

like

like the Bleſſed Angels, you do always behold the Face of your Father which is in Heaven.

I need not then exhort you to preſs forward: For you know that in walking by the Spirit there is great Reward. Rather will I exhort you in Patience to poſſeſs your Souls yet a little while, and *Jeſus Chriſt* will deliver you from the Burden of the Fleſh, and an abundant Entrance ſhall be adminiſtered unto you into the eternal Joy and uninterrupted Felicity of his Heavenly Kingdom.

Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons and One God, be aſcribed all Honour, Power, and Glory, for ever and ever.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

The Power of CHRIST's Reſurrection.

PHILIP. iii. 10.

That I may know Him, and the Power of His Reſurrection.

THE Apoſtle, in the Verſes going before the Text, had been cautioning the *Philippians* to beware of the Conciſſion, *i. e.* of ſome *Judaizing Teachers*, who endeavoured to ſubvert the Simplicity of the Goſpel, by telling them, they ſtill ought to be ſubject to Circumciſion, and all the other Ordinances of *Moſes*.—And that they might not think he ſpoke out of Prejudice, and condemned their Tenets, becauſe he himſelf was a Stranger to the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation, he acquaints them, that if any other Man thought that he had whereof he might truſt in the Fleſh, *i. e.* ſeek to be juſtified by the outward Privileges of the *Jews*, he had more. For he was circumciſed the

the eighth Day, of the Stock of *Iſrael*, *i. e.* not a Proſelyte, but a native *Iſraelite*, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*; the Tribe which adhered to *Judah* when the others revolted; an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; a *Jew* both on the Father's and Mother's Side; as touching the Law, a *Phariſee*, the ſtricteſt Sect amongſt all *Iſrael*.—And to ſhew he was no *Gallio* in Religion, on account of his great, though miſguided Zeal, he had perſecuted the Church of *Chriſt*; and as touching the Righteouſneſs of the Law, as far as the *Phariſees* Expoſition of it went, he was blameleſs, and had kept it from his Youth.—But, ſays he, when it pleaſed God, who ſeparated me from my Mother's Womb, to reveal his Son in me, what Things were Gain to me, thoſe Privileges I boaſted myſelf in, and ſought to be juſtified by, I counted Loſs for *Chriſt*. And that they might not think that it repented him that he had done ſo, he tells them, he was now more confirmed than ever in his Judgment. For, ſays he, yea doubtleſs (the Expreſſion in the Original riſes with a holy Triumph) and even now I count all Things but Loſs for the Excellency of the Knowledge of *Chriſt Jeſus* my Lord.—And that they might not object that he ſaid and did not, he acquaints them, he had given Proofs of the Sincerity of theſe Profeſſions, becauſe for the Sake of them, he had ſuffered the Loſs of all his worldly Things, and ſtill was willing to do more; for, ſays he, I count them but Dung (no more than Offals thrown out to Dogs) ſo that I may win, or have a ſaving Intereſt in *Chriſt*, and be found in him (as the Manſlayer in the City of Refuge) not having my own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law, not depend-

depending on having *Abraham* for my Father, or any Works of Righteouſneſs which I have done, either to atone or ſerve as a Balance for my evil Deeds, but that which is through the Faith of *Chriſt*, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith. *i. e.* A Righteouſneſs of God's appointing, and which will be imputed to me, if I believe in *Chriſt*,—that I may know him, *i. e. Chriſt*, and the Power of his Reſurrection; that I may have an experimental Knowledge of the Efficacy of his Reſurrection, by feeling the Influences of his Bleſſed Spirit on my Soul.---- In which Words two Things are implied.

Firſt, That *Jeſus Chriſt* did riſe from the Dead.

Secondly, That it highly concerns us to know the Power of his Riſing again.

Accordingly in the following Diſcourſe I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

Firſt, That *Chriſt* is riſen indeed from the Dead; and that it was neceſſary for him ſo to do; and,

Secondly, That it highly concerns us to know and experience the Power of his Reſurrection.

That *Jeſus* ſhould riſe from the Dead was abſolutely neceſſary; firſt on his own Account--- For he had often appealed to this as the laſt and moſt convincing Proof he would give them that he was the true Meſſiah,---*There ſhall no other Sign be given you*, ſays he, *than the Sign of the Prophet* Jonas.-----And again, *Deſtroy this*

Temple of my Body, and in three Days I will build it up.---Which Words his Enemies remembered, and urged it, as an Argument, to induce *Pilate*, to grant them a Watch, to prevent his being ſtolen out of the Grave.----*We know that that Deceiver ſaid, whilſt He was yet alive, After three days I will riſe again.*---So that had he not riſen again, they might have juſtly ſaid, We know that this Man was an Impoſtor.

Secondly, It was neceſſary on our Account,---*He roſe again*, ſays the Apoſtle, *for our Juſtification*; *i. e.* that the Debt we owed to God for our Sins might be fully ſatisfied and diſcharged.

It had pleaſed the Father (for ever adored be his infinite Love and free Grace) to wound his only Son for our Tranſgreſſions, and to arreſt and confine him in the Priſon of the Grave, as our Surety for the Guilt we had contracted by ſetting at nought his Commandments.——Now had *Chriſt* continued always in the Grave, we could have had no more Aſſurance that our Sins were ſatisfied for, than any common Debtor can have of his Creditor's being ſatisfied whilſt his Surety is kept confined.——But he being releaſed from the Power of Death, we are thereby aſſured that in his Sacrifice God was well pleaſed,——that our Atonement was finiſhed on the Croſs,---and that he had made a full, perfect, and ſufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for the Sins of the whole World.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It was neceſſary that our Lord *Jeſus* ſhould riſe again from the Dead, to aſſure us of the Certainty of the Reſurrection of our own Bodies.

The Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the Body was entirely exploded and ſet at nought among the *Gentiles*, as appears from the *Athenians* mocking at and calling St. *Paul* a Babler and a Setter forth of ſtrange Doctrines, when he preached to them *Jeſus*, and the Reſurrection.----And though it was believed by moſt of the *Jews*, as is evident from many Paſſages of Scripture; yet not by all; the whole Sect of the *Sadducees* denied it. But the Reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt* put it out of Diſpute.----For as he acted as our Repreſentative, if he our Head be riſen, then muſt we alſo, who are his Members, riſe with him.----And as in the firſt *Adam* we all died, even ſo in him our ſecond *Adam* we muſt all in this Senſe be made alive.

As it was neceſſary, upon all theſe Accounts, that our Bleſſed Lord ſhould riſe from the Dead; ſo it is plain beyond Contradiction, that he did. Never was any Matter of Fact better atteſted. Never were more Precautions made uſe of to prevent a Cheat.---He was buried in a Sepulchre, hewn out of a Rock, ſo that it could not be ſaid that any digged under, and conveyed him away. It was a Sepulchre alſo wherein never Man before was laid; ſo that if any Body did riſe from thence, it muſt be the Body of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*.---Beſides, the Sepulchre was ſealed; a great Stone rolled to the Mouth of it; and a Band of Soldiers (conſiſting not of his Friends, but of his profeſſed Enemies) was ſet to guard it.-----

And as for his Diſciples coming by Night and ſtealing him away, it was altogether impoſſible. For it was not long ſince that they had all forſaken him, and they were the moſt backward in believing his Reſurrection.---And ſuppoſing it was true that they came whilſt the Soldiers ſlept; yet the Soldiers muſt be caſt into a deep Sleep indeed, that the rolling away ſo great a Stone did not awake ſome of them.

And our Bleſſed Lord's afterwards appearing at ſundry Times, and in divers Manners, to his Diſciples, when they were aſſembled together, when they were walking to *Emmaus*, when they were fiſhing; nay, and condeſcending to ſhew them his Hands and Feet, and his at length appearing to above five hundred Brethren at once, put the Truth of his Reſurrection out of all Diſpute.

Indeed there is one Objection that may be made againſt what has been ſaid,----That the Books wherein theſe Facts are recorded were written by his Diſciples.

And who more proper Perſons than thoſe who were Eye-Witneſſes of what they related, and eat and drank with him after his Reſurrection. "But they were illiterate and ignorant Men." Yet as good Witneſſes of a plain Matter of Fact, as the moſt learned Maſters in *Iſrael*.---Nay, this rendered them more proper Witneſſes.---For being plain Men, they were therefore leſs to be ſuſpected of telling or making a Lye,-----particularly, ſince they laid down their Lives for a Teſtimony of the Truth of it. We read indeed of *Jacob*'s telling a Lie, though he was a plain Man, in order to get his Father's Bleſſing. But it was never heard ſince

the

the World began, that any Man, much leſs a whole Set of Men, died Martyrs for the Sake of an Untruth, when they themſelves were to reap no Advantage from it.

No, this ſingle Circumſtance proves them to be *Iſraelites* indeed, in whom was no Guile.---- And the wonderful Succeſs God gave to their Miniſtry afterwards, when three thouſand were converted by one Sermon, and twelve poor Fiſhermen, in a very ſhort Time, were enabled to be more than Conquerors over all the Oppoſition Men or Devils could make, was as plain a Demonſtration, that *Chriſt* was riſen, according to their Goſpel, as that a Divine Power, at the Sound of a few Ram's Horns, cauſed the Walls of *Jericho* to fall down.

But what need we any farther Witneſſes? Believe you the Reſurrection of our Bleſſed Lord? I know that you believe it, as your gathering together on this firſt Day of the Week in the Courts of the Lord's Houſe abundantly teſtifies.

What concerns us moſt to be aſſured of, and which is the

Second Thing I was to ſpeak to, is,——— Whether we have experimentally known the Power of his Reſurrection; that is, *Whether or not we have received the Holy Ghoſt*, and by his powerful Operations on our Hearts been raiſed from the Death of Sin, to a Life of Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs.

It was this the great Apoſtle was chiefly deſirous to know,-----The Reſurrection of *Chriſt*'s

Body he was ſatisfied, would avail him nothing, unleſs he experienced the Power of it in raiſing his dead Soul.

For another, and that a chief End of our Bleſſed Lord's riſing from the Dead, was to enter Heaven as our Repreſentative, and to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt to apply that Redemption he had finiſhed on the Croſs to our Hearts, by working an entire Change in them.

Without this, *Chriſt* would have died in vain. For it would have done us no Service to have had his outward Righteouſneſs imputed to us, unleſs we had an inward inherent Righteouſneſs wrought in us.---Becauſe being altogether conceived and born in Sin, and conſequently unfit to hold Communion with an infinitely pure and holy God, we cannot poſſibly be made meet to ſee or enjoy him, till a thorough Renovation has paſſed upon our Hearts.

Without this, we leave out the Holy Ghoſt in the great Work of our Redemption.---- But as we were made by the Joint Concurrence and Conſultation of the bleſſed Trinity. And as we were baptized in their Name—So muſt all of them concur in rendring that Baptiſm effectual to our Salvation: As the Father made, and the Son Redeemed, ſo muſt the Holy Ghoſt ſanctify and ſeal us, or otherwiſe we have believed in vain.

This then is what the Apoſtle means by the Power of *Chriſt's* Reſurrection, and this is what we are as much concerned experimentally to know, as that He roſe at all.

Without this, though we may be Moraliſts, though we may be civilized, good natured People, yet we are no Chriſtians----For he is not

a true

a true Chriſtian, who is only one outwardly; nor have we therefore a right Faith, becauſe we daily profeſs to believe that *Chriſt* roſe again the third Day from the Dead. But he is a true Chriſtian who is one inwardly; and then only can we be ſtiled true Believers, when we not only profeſs to believe, but have felt the Power of our bleſſed Lord's riſing from the Dead, by being quickned and raiſed by his Spirit when dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, to a thorough Newneſs both of Heart and Life.

The Devils themſelves cannot but believe the Doctrine of the Reſurrection and tremble—But yet they continue Devils, becauſe the Benefits of this Reſurrection have not been applied to them, nor have they received a renovating Power from it to change and put off their Diabolical Nature—And ſo likewiſe, unleſs we not only profeſs to know, but alſo feel that *Chriſt* is riſen indeed, by being born again from above, we ſhall be as far from the Kingdom of God as they, our Faith will be as ineffectual as the Faith of Devils.

Nothing has done more harm to the Chriſtian World; nothing has rendred the Croſs of *Chriſt* of leſs Effect than a vain Suppoſition, that Religion is ſomething without us—Whereas we ſhould conſider that every thing that *Chriſt* did outwardly, muſt be done over again in our Souls; or otherwiſe believing there was ſuch a divine Perſon once on Earth, who triumphed over Hell and the Grave, will profit us no more, than believing there was once ſuch a Perſon as *Alexander*, who conquered the World.

As *Chriſt* was born of the Virgin's Womb, ſo muſt he be ſpiritually formed in our Hearts—As He died for Sin, ſo muſt we die to Sin—And as

he roſe again from the Dead, ſo muſt we alſo riſe to a Divine Life.

None but thoſe who have followed him in this Regeneration, or new Birth, ſhall ſit on Thrones as Approvers of his Sentence, when he ſhall come in terrible Majeſty to judge the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*.

'Tis true, as for the outward Work of our Redemption it was a tranſient Act, and was certaintainly finiſhed on the Croſs—But the Application of that Redemption to our Hearts is a Work that will continue always, even unto the End of the World.

So long as there is a Man breathing on the Earth, who is naturally engendred of the Offspring of the firſt *Adam*, ſo long muſt the quickening Spirit which was purchaſed by the Reſurrection of of the ſecond *Adam*, that Lord from Heaven, be Breathing upon his Soul.

For tho' we may exiſt by *Chriſt*, yet we cannot be ſaid to exiſt in Him, till we are united to him by one Spirit, and enter into a new State of Things, as certainly as He entred into a new State of Things, after that he roſe from the Dead.

We may throng and crowd around about *Chriſt*, and call him Lord, Lord, when we come to worſhip before his Footſtool; but we have not effectually touched Him, till by a lively Faith in His Reſurrection, we perceive a Divine Virtue coming out of Him, to renew and purify our Souls.

How greatly then do they err who reſt in a bare Hiſtorical Faith of our Saviour's Reſurrection, and look only for external Proofs to evidence it? Whereas were we the moſt learned Diſputers

of

of this World, and could ſpeak of the Certainty of this Fact with the Tongue of Men and Angels, yet without this inward Teſtimony of it in our Hearts, tho' we might convince others, yet we ſhould never be ſaved by it ourſelves.

For we are but dead Men, we are but like ſo many Carcaſſes wrapt up in Grave Cloaths, till that ſame *Jeſus* who called *Lazarus* from his Tomb, and at whoſe Reſurrection many that ſlept aroſe,---raiſe us alſo by his quickening Spirit from our natural Death, in which we have ſo long lain, to a holy and heavenly Life.

We might think ourſelves happy, if we had ſeen the Holy *Jeſus* after He was riſen from the Dead, and our Hands handled that Lord of Life. But more happy are they who have not ſeen him, and yet having felt the Power of his Reſurrection, therefore believe in Him.---For many ſaw our Divine Maſter, who were not ſaved by him; but whoſoever has thus felt the Power of his Reſurrection, he has the Earneſt of his Inheritance in his Heart, he has paſſed from Death to Life, and ſhall never, if he ſtill ſtir up the Gift of God that is in him, fall into Condemnation.

I am very ſenſible that this is Fooliſhneſs to the Natural Man, as were many ſuch like Truths to our Lord's own Diſciples before he roſe again. But when theſe natural Men, like them, have felt the Power of his Reſurrection, they will then own that this Doctrine is from God, and ſay with the *Samaritans*, Now we believe not becauſe of thy Saying, for we ourſelves have experienced it in our Hearts.

And Oh that all Unbelievers, all Letter-learned Maſters of *Iſrael*, who now look upon the Doctrine of the Power of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection,

or our new Birth, as an idle Tale, and condemn the Preachers of it as Enthuſiaſts and Madmen, did but thus feel the Power of it in their Souls,—They would no longer ask, How this Thing could be?—But they would be convinced of it as much as *Thomas* was when he ſaw the Lord's *Chriſt*; and like him, when *Jeſus* bid him reach out his Hands and thruſt into his Side, in a holy Confuſion they would cry out, My Lord and my God!

But how ſhall an Unbeliever, how ſhall the formal Chriſtian come thus to know *Chriſt*, and the Power of his Reſurrection?——That God who cannot lye has told us, *I am the Reſurrection and the Life*, ſays *Jeſus Chriſt*, *whoſoever liveth and believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live*,——Again, ſays the Apoſtle, *By Faith we are ſaved, and that not of ourſelves, it is the Gift of God.*

This, this is the Way, walk in it.—This do, and ye ſhall live. You ſhall live in *Chriſt*, and *Chriſt* in you; you ſhall be one with *Chriſt*, and *Chriſt* with you.----But without this your outward Goodneſs and Profeſſions will avail you nothing.

But then by this Faith we are to underſtand not a dead ſpeculative Faith, a Faith in the Head; but a living Principle wrought in the Heart by the powerful Operations of the Holy Ghoſt---A Faith that will enable us to overcome the World, and forſake all in Affection for *Jeſus Chriſt*. For thus ſpeaks our Bleſſed Maſter, *Unleſs a Man forſake all that he hath, he cannot be my Diſciple.*

And ſo the Apoſtle, in the Words immediately following the Text, ſays, *being made conformable to his Death*; thereby implying, that the knowing the Power of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection cannot be without the being made conformable to him in his Death.

This we have ſhadowed out by the Cuſtom of Baptizing by Immerſion in the Primitive Church, and (which is alſo recommended by our own) their putting the Infants under the Water, ſignified their Obligation to die unto Sin; as their taking them out of the Water, ſignified their riſing again to Newneſs of Life. To which the Apoſtle plainly alludes, when he ſays, *We are buried with him in Baptiſm.*

If we can reconcile Light and Darkneſs, Heaven and Hell, then we may hope to know the Power of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection without dying to ourſelves and the World.---But till we can do this, we might as well expect that *Chriſt* will have Concord with *Belial.*

For there is ſuch a Contrariety between the Spirit of this World, and the Spirit of *Jeſus Chriſt*, that he who will be at Friendſhip with the one, muſt be at Enmity with the other----- *We cannot ſerve God and Mammon.*

This may indeed ſeem a hard Saying, and many, with the young Man in the Goſpel, may be tempted to go away ſorrowful? But wherefore ſhould this offend them? For what is all that is in the World, the Luſt of the Eye, the Luſt of the Fleſh, and the Pride of Life, but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit?

God

God is Love; and therefore could our own Wills, or the World have made us happy, he never would have ſent his own dear Son *Jeſus Chriſt* to die and riſe again, to deliver us from the Power of them.---But becauſe they only torment, but cannot ſatisfy, therefore God bids renounce them.

Had any one perſuaded profane *Eſau* not to loſe ſo glorious a Privilege merely for the Sake of gratifying a preſent corrupt Inclination, when he ſaw him about to ſell his Birthright for a little red Pottage, would not one think that Man was *Eſau*'s Friend?---And juſt thus ſtands the Caſe between God and us.---By the Death and Reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt* we are new-born to an Heavenly Inheritance amongſt all them which are ſanctified, but our own corrupt Wills would tempt us to ſell this glorious Birthright for the Vanities of the World, which, like *Eſau*'s red Pottage, may pleaſe us for a while, but will ſoon be taken away from us.---God knows this, and therefore bids us rather renounce them for a Seaſon, than for the ſhort Enjoyment of them loſe the Privilege of that glorious Birthright, to which by the Reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt* we are entitled.

Oh the Depth of the Riches and Excellence of Chriſtianity! Well might the great St. *Paul* count all Things but Dung and Droſs for the Excellency of the Knowledge of it.--Well might he deſire ſo ardently to know *Jeſus*, and the Power of his Reſurrection.---For even on this Side Eternity it raiſes us above the World, and makes us ſit in Heavenly Places in *Chriſt Jeſus*.

Well

Well might that glorious Company of Worthies, recorded in the Holy Scriptures, ſupported with a deep Senſe of their Heavenly Calling, deſpiſe the Pleaſures and Profits of this Life, and wander about in Sheep-Skins, and Goat-Skins, in Dens and Caves of the Earth, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented.

And oh that we were all like minded! that we felt the Power of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection as they did! How ſhould we then count all Things as Dung and Droſs for the Excellency of the Knowledge of *Chriſt Jeſus*, our Lord! How ſhould we then recover our primitive Dignity, trample Earth under our Feet, and with our Souls be continually gaſping after God.

And what hinders but we may be thus minded? Is *Jeſus Chriſt*, our great High Prieſt, altered from what he was? No, he is the ſame Yeſterday, to Day, and for ever.------- And though he is exalted to the Right Hand of God, is not aſhamed to call us Brethren.-- The Power of his Reſurrection is as great now as formerly, and the Holy Spirit, which was aſſured to us by his Reſurrection, as ready and able to quicken us who are dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, as any Saint that ever lived. Let us but cry, and that inſtantly, to him that is mighty and able to ſave.---Let us, in Sincerity and Truth, without ſecretly keeping back the leaſt Part, renounce ourſelves and the World.---And then we ſhall be Chriſtians indeed.---And though the World may caſt us out, and ſeparate from our Company, yet *Jeſus Chriſt* will walk with and abide in us.-- And at the general Reſurrection of the laſt Day,

when

when the Voice of the Archangel and Trump of God ſhall bid the Sea and the Graves give up their Dead, and all Nations ſhall appear before him, then will he confeſs us before his Father and the Holy Angels, and we ſhall receive that Sentence which he ſhall then pronounce to all that love and fear him, ſaying, *Come ye bleſſed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Beginning of the World.*

℣. *Grant this, O Father, for the ſame thy dear Son's Sake Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghoſt,* &c.

SERMON

SERMON IV.

The DUTY of ſearching the SCRIPTURES.

JOHN v. 39.

Search the SCRIPTURES.

WHEN the *Sadducees* came to our Bleſſed Lord, and put to him the Queſtion, *whoſe Wife a Woman ſhould be in the next Life, who had ſeven Husbands in this?* He told them, *they erred, not knowing the Scriptures*—And if we would know whence all the Errors that have overſpread the Church of *Chriſt*, firſt aroſe, we ſhould find they in a great Meaſure flowed from the ſame Fountain, *viz. An Ignorance of the Word of God.*

Our Bleſſed Lord, though he was the Eternal God, yet as Man, made it his conſtant Rule and Guide—And therefore, when he was asked by the Lawyer, *Which was the great Commandment of the Law?* He referred him to his Bible for an Anſwer, *What readeſt thou?* —— And thus

thus, when led by the Spirit, to be tempted by the Devil, he repelled all his Aſſaults, with *It is written.*

A ſufficient Confutation this of their Opinion, who ſay, "The Spirit only, and not the "Spirit by the Word, is to be our Rule of Ac-"tion."——If ſo, our Saviour, who had the Spirit without Meaſure, needed not always have referred to the written Word.

But how few copy after the Example of *Chriſt?* How many are there, who do not regard the Word of God at all, but throw the Sacred Oracles aſide, as an antiquated Book, fit only for unlearned and illiterate Men?

Such Men do greatly err, not knowing what the Scriptures are, and for what they are deſigned.

I ſhall therefore in the following Diſcourſe,

I. *Firſt* ſhew that it is every one's Duty to ſearch them. And,

II. *Secondly*, lay down ſome Directions how to ſearch them with Advantage.

By the Scriptures I underſtand the Law and the Prophets, and all thoſe Books which have in all Ages been accounted Canonical, and which make up that Book commonly called, *The Bible.* Theſe are emphatically ſtiled *The Scriptures*, and in one Place, *The Scriptures of Truth*, as though no other Books deſerved the Name of true Writings or Scriptures in Compariſon of them.

They are not of any private Interpretation, Authority, or Invention, but Holy Men of old wrote

wrote them, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

The Foundation of God's revealing himſelf thus to Mankind, was our Fall in *Adam*, and the Neceſſity of our *New Birth* in *Chriſt Jeſus*. And if we ſearch the Scriptures as we ought, we ſhall find the Sum and Subſtance, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and End of them, has no other Tendency but to lead us to a Knowledge of theſe two great Truths.

All the Threats, Promiſes, and Precepts, all the Exhortations and Doctrines contained therein, all the Rites, and Ceremonies, and Sacrifices appointed under the *Jewiſh* Law; nay, almoſt all the Hiſtorical Parts of Holy Scripture, ſuppoſe our being fallen in *Adam*, and either point out to us a Mediator to come, or ſpeak of him as already come in the Fleſh.

Had Man continued in a State of Innocence, he would not have needed an outward Revelation, becauſe the Law of God was ſo deeply written in the Tables of his Heart. But having eaten of the forbidden Fruit, he incurred the Divine Diſpleaſure, and loſt the Divine Image, and therefore without an outward Revelation could never tell how God would be reconciled unto him, or how he ſhould be ſaved from the Miſery and Darkneſs of his fallen Nature.

That theſe Truths are ſo, I need not refer you to any other Book than that of your own Hearts.

For unleſs we are fallen Creatures, whence come thoſe abominable Corruptions which daily ariſe in our Hearts? We could not come thus corrupt out of the Hands of our Maker, becauſe he being Goodneſs itſelf, could make nothing but what

what is like himſelf, Holy, Juſt, and Good. And that we want to be delivered from theſe Diſorders of our Nature is evident, becauſe we find an Unwillingneſs within ourſelves to own we are thus depraved, and are always ſtriving to appear to others of a quite different Frame and Temper of Mind, than what we are.

I appeal to the Experience of the moſt learned Diſputer againſt Divine Revelation, whether he does not find in himſelf that he is naturally Proud, Angry, Revengeful, and full of other Tempers contrary to the Purity, Holineſs, and Long-Suffering of God.—And is not this a demonſtrable Proof that ſome way or other he is fallen from God?—— And I appeal alſo whether at the ſame Time he finds theſe Helliſh Tempers in his Heart, he does not ſtrive to ſeem Amiable, Courteous, Kind, and Affable; and is not this as manifeſt a Proof that he is ſenſible that he is Miſerable, and wants, he knows not how, to be redeemed or delivered from it?

Here then God by his Word ſteps in, and opens to his View ſuch a Scene of Divine Love, and infinite Goodneſs in the Holy Scriptures, that none but Men, of ſuch corrupt and reprobate Minds as our modern Deiſts, would ſhut their Eyes againſt it.

For what does God in his written Word do more or leſs, than ſhew thee, O Man, how thou art fallen into that Blindneſs, Darkneſs, and Miſery thou feeleſt and complaineſt of? And at the ſame Time points out the Way to what thou deſireſt, *viz.*—How thou mayeſt be redeemed out of it,——by believing in, and copying after the Son of his Love.

For,

For, as I told you before, ſo I tell you again, upon theſe two Truths hangs all Divine Revelation. It being given us for no other End but to ſhew us our Miſery, and our Happineſs; our Fall and Recovery; or, in one Word, after what Manner we died in *Adam*, and how in *Chriſt* we may again be made alive.

Hence then ariſes the Neceſſity of ſearching the Scriptures. For ſince they are nothing elſe but the grand Character of our Salvation, a Revelation of a Covenant made by God with Man in *Chriſt*, a Light to guide them into the Way of Peace: It follows, that all are obliged to read and ſearch them, becauſe all are equally fallen from God, all equally ſtand in need of being informed what they muſt do to be reſtored to, and again united with him.

How fooliſhly then do the diſputing Infidels of this Generation act, who are continually either calling for Signs from Heaven, or ſeeking for outward Evidence to prove the Truth of Divine Revelation? Whereas what they ſo earneſtly ſeek for is nigh unto, nay, within them. For let them but conſult their own Hearts, they cannot but feel what they want—Let them but conſult the lively Oracles of God, and they cannot but ſee a Remedy revealed for all their Wants, and that the written Word does as exactly anſwer the Wants and Deſire of their Hearts, as Face anſwers to Face in the Water—Where then is the Scribe, where then is the Wiſe, where is the Solidity of the Reaſoning of the Diſputers of this World? Has not God revealed himſelf unto them as plain as their own Hearts could wiſh? And yet they require a Sign. But there ſhall no other Sign be given them. For if they believe not

not a Revelation every way ſo ſuited to their Wants, neither will they be perſuaded though one ſhould riſe from the Dead.

But this Diſcourſe is not deſigned ſo much for them that believe not, as for them who both know and believe that the Scriptures contain a Revelation that came from God, and that it is their Duty, as being chief Parties concerned, not only to Read, but ſearch them alſo.

I paſs on therefore, as was propoſed, in the ſecond Place, to lay down ſome Directions how to ſearch them with Advantage.

And *Firſt*, Have alſo in View, the End for which the Scriptures were written—to ſhew us the Way of Salvation by Jeſus Chriſt.

Search the Scriptures, ſays our Bleſſed Lord, for they are they that teſtify of me—Look therefore always for Chriſt in the Scripture. For he is the Treaſure hid in the Field, both of the Old and New Teſtament—In the Old you'll find him hid under Propheſies, Types, Sacrifices and Shadows; in the New, manifeſted in the Fleſh, to become a Propitiation for our Sin, as a Prieſt; and as a Prophet, to reveal the whole Will of his Heavenly Father.

Have Chriſt, and to become a Principle then of a new Life to our Souls, thus always in view when you are Reading the Word of God, and this, like the Star in the Eaſt, will guide you to the *Meſſiah*, will ſerve as a Key to every thing that is obſcure, aud unlock to you the Wiſdom and Riches of all the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God.

Secondly,

Secondly, Search the Scriptures with an humble Child-like Diſpoſition.

For whoſoever does not read them with this Temper ſhall in no wiſe enter into the Knowledge of the Things contained therein. For God hides the Senſe of them from thoſe that are wiſe and prudent in their own Eyes, and reveals them only to Babes in Chriſt, who think they know nothing yet as they ought to know, who hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs, and humbly deſire to be fed with the ſincere Milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby.

Fancy yourſelves therefore when you are ſearching the Scriptures, eſpecially when you are reading the New Teſtament, to be with *Mary* ſitting at the Feet of the Holy *Jeſus*, and be as willing to learn what God ſhall teach You, as *Samuel* was, when he ſaid, *Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth.*

And Oh that the Unbelievers would pull down every high Thought and Imagination that exalts itſelf againſt the Revealed Will of God! Oh that they would, like new-born Babes, deſire to be fed with the pure Milk of the Word! then we ſhould have them no longer ſcoffing at Divine Revelation, nor would they read the Bible any more with the ſame Intent (the *Philiſtines* brought out *Sampſon*) to make Sport at it, but they would ſee the Divine Image and Superſcription written upon every Line of it. They would hear God ſpeaking unto their Souls by it, and conſequently be built up in the Knowledge and Fear of him who is the Author of it.

Thirdly, Search the Scriptures with a ſincere Intention to put in Practice what you read.

For

For a Deſire to do the Will of *God* is the only way to know it, *If any Man will do my Will*, ſays *Jeſus Chriſt*, *He ſhall know of my Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of myſelf.* As He alſo ſpeaks in another Place to his Diſciples, *To You*, who are willing to practice your Duty, *it is given to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God; but to thoſe that are without*, who only want to raiſe Cavils againſt my Doctrine, *all theſe Things are ſpoken in Parables, that ſeeing they may ſee and not underſtand, and hearing they may hear and not perceive.*

For it is but juſt in God to ſend thoſe ſtrong Deluſions, that they may believe a Lye, and to conceal the Knowledge of himſelf from all ſuch as do not ſeek him with a ſingle Intention.

Jeſus Chriſt is the ſame now as formerly. To thoſe who deſire to know from his Word, who he is that they may believe on and live by and to him, he will reveal himſelf as clearly as did to the Woman of *Samaria*, when he ſaid, *I that ſpeak to thee am He*; or as he did to the Man that was born Blind, whom the *Jews* had caſt out for his Name's ſake, *He that talketh with thee is He.* But to thoſe who conſult his Word with a Deſire neither to know him or keep his Commandments, but either merely for their Entertainment or to ſcoff at the Simplicity of the manner in which he is revealed, to thoſe, I ſay, he never will reveal himſelf, though they ſhould ſearch the Scriptures to all Eternity.—As he never would tell thoſe whether he was the *Meſſiah* or not, who put that Queſtion to him either out of Curioſity, or that they might have whereof to accuſe them

Fourthly,

Fourthly, In order to ſearch the Scriptures ſtill more effectually, make an Application of every thing you read to your own Hearts.

For whatever was written in the Book of God was written for our Learning. And what *Chriſt* ſaid unto thoſe aforetime, we muſt look upon as ſpoken to us alſo: For ſince the Holy Scriptures are nothing but a Revelation from God, how fallen Man is to be reſtored by *Jeſus Chriſt*, all the Precepts, Threats, and Promiſes, belong to us and to our Children, as well as to thoſe to whom they were immediately made known.

Thus the Apoſtle, when he tell us that *he lived by the Faith of the Son of God*, adds *who died and gave himſelf for me*, For it is this Application of *Jeſus Chriſt* to our Hearts that makes his Redemption effectual to each of us.

And it is this Application of all the Doctrinal and Hiſtorical Parts of Scripture, when we are reading them over, that muſt render them profitable to us, as they were deſigned for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, and make every Child of God perfect, thoroughly furniſhed to every good Work.

And I dare appeal to the Experience of every Spiritual Reader of Holy Writ, whether or no if he conſulted the Word of God in this Manner, he was not at all Times and at all Seaſons as plainly directed how to act, as tho' he had conſulted the *Urim* and *Thummim* which was upon the *High Prieſt*'s Breaſt.

For this is the Way *God* now reveals himſelf to Man: Not by making new Revelations, but by applying general Things that are revealed already to every particular ſincere Reader's Heart.

And

And this, by the Way, anſwers an Objection made by thoſe that ſay, " the Word of God " is not a perfect Rule of Action, becauſe it can- " not direct us how to act, or how to determine " in particular Caſes, or what Place to go to " when we are in doubt, and therefore the " Spirit, and not the Word, is to be our Rule " of Action.

But this I deny, and affirm on the contrary, that God at all Times, Circumſtances, and Places, though never ſo minute, never ſo particular, will, if we diligently ſeek the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, apply general Things to our Hearts, and thereby, to uſe the Words of the Holy *Jeſus*, will, lead us into all Truth, and give us the particular Aſſiſtance we want: But this leads me to a

Fifth Direction how to ſearch the Scriptures with Profit. Labour to attain that Spirit by which they were wrote.

For the natural Man diſcerneth not the Words of the Spirit of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned, the Words that *Chriſt* hath ſpoken they are Spirit, and they are Life, and can be no more underſtood, as to the true hidden Senſe and Meaning of them, by the mere natural Man, than a Perſon who had never learnt a Language can underſtand another ſpeaking in it. The Scriptures therefore have not unfitly been compar'd by ſome to the Cloud which went before the *Iſraelites*, they are dark and hard to be underſtood by the natural Man, as the Cloud appeared dark to the *Egyptians*, but they are Light, they are Life to Chriſtians indeed, as that ſame Cloud which ſeem'd dark to *Pharaoh* and his Houſe appeared bright and altogether glorious to the *Iſrael* of God.

It

It was the Want of the Aſſiſtance of this Spirit that made *Nicodemus*, a Teacher of *Iſrael*, Ruler of the *Jews*, ſo utterly ignorant of the Doctrine of *Regeneration*: For being only a natural Man, he could not tell how that thing could be; it was the Want of this Spirit that made our Saviour's Diſciples, though he ſo frequently converſed with them, daily miſtake the Nature of the Doctrines he delivered; and it is becauſe the natural Veil is not taken off from their Hearts, that ſo many who pretend to ſearch the Scriptures, yet ſee no farther than into the bare Letter of them, and continue entire Strangers to the hidden Senſe, the Spiritual Meaning, couched under every Parable, and contained in almoſt all the Precepts of the Book of God.

And indeed how ſhould it be otherwiſe; for God being a Spirit, he cannot communicate himſelf any otherwiſe than in a ſpiritual Manner to the Hearts of Men; and conſequently if we are Strangers to his Spirit, we muſt continue Strangers to his Word, becauſe it is altogether like himſelf Spiritual. Labour therefore earneſtly, to attain his bleſſed Spirit, for otherwiſe, your Underſtandings will never be opened to underſtand the Scriptures aright, and becauſe Prayer is one of the moſt immediate Means to get this Holy Spirit.

Sixthly, Let me adviſe you before you read the Scripture, to pray that *Chriſt*, according to his Promiſe, would ſend his Spirit to guide you into all Truth; interſperſe ſhort Ejaculations whilſt you are engaged in Reading, pray over every Word and Verſe if poſſible, and when you cloſe up the Book, moſt earneſtly beſeech God, that the Words which you then have read may be inwardly engrafted into your Hearts, and bring forth in you the Fruits of Good Living.

Do this, and you will with a holy Violence draw down God's Holy Spirit into your Hearts, and you will experience his gracious Influences, and feel him enlightening, quickening, and inflaming your Souls by the Word of God; you will then not only read, but mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt what you read, and the Word of God will be Meat indeed and Drink indeed unto your Souls; you then will be as *Apollos* was, powerful in the Scriptures, be *Scribes* ready inſtructed to the Kingdom of God, and bring out of the good Treaſures of your Heart, Things both from the Old and New Teſtament, to entertain all you converſe with.

One Direction more, which ſhall be the laſt, *Seventhly*, Read the Scripture conſtantly, or to uſe our Saviour's Expreſſion in the Text, *Search the Scriptures*, dig in them as for hid Treaſure, for here's a manifeſt Alluſion to thoſe who dig in Mines, and our Saviour would thereby teach us that we muſt take as much Pains in conſtantly reading his Word, if we would grow thereby, as thoſe dig for Gold and Silver. The Scriptures contain the Deep Things of God, and therefore can never be ſufficiently ſearch'd into by a careleſs, ſuperficial, curſory way of reading them, but by an induſtrious, cloſe and humble Application.

The Pſalmiſt therefore makes it the Property of a good Man that he meditates on God's Law Day and Night: *And this Book of the Law*, ſays *God* to *Joſhua*, *ſhall not go out thy Mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein Day and Night, for then thou ſhalt make thy way proſperous, and then thou ſhalt have good Succeſs. Search therefore the Scriptures* not only devoutly but daily, for in them are the Words of eternal Life; wait conſtantly at Wiſ-

dom's

dom's Gate, and ſhe will then, and not till then, diſplay and lay open to you her Heavenly Treaſures; you that are rich are without excuſe if you do not, and you that are poor ought to take heed that little time you have; for *by the Scriptures you are to be acquited, and by the Scriptures you are to be condemned at the Laſt Day.*

But perhaps you have no Taſte for this deſpiſed Book; perhaps Plays and Romances, Books of polite Entertainment, ſuit your Taſte better; but if this be your Caſe, give me leave to tell you, your Taſte is vitiated, and unleſs corrected by the Spirit and Word of God, you ſhall never enter into his heavenly Kingdom, for unleſs you delight in God here, how will you be made meet to dwell with him hereafter.—Is it a Sin then, you will ſay, to read uſeleſs impertinent Books, I anſwer, yes: And that for the ſame Reaſon, as it is a Sin to indulge uſeleſs Converſation, becauſe both immediately tend to grieve and quench that Spirit by which alone we can be ſealed to the Day of Redemption; but you may reply, *How ſhall we know this?* Why, put in Practice the Preception, the Text, *Search the Scripture* in the Manner that has been recommended, and then you will be convinced of the Danger, Sinfulneſs, and Unſatisfactorineſs of reading any other than the Book of God, or ſuch as are wrote in the ſame Spirit; you will then ſay, When I was a Child, and ignorant of the Excellency of the Word of God, I read other, what the World calls harmleſs Books, as other Children in Knowledge, though old in Years, have done, and ſtill do; but now I have taſted the good Word of Life, and come to a more perfect Knowledge of *Chriſt Jeſus* my Lord; I put

away theſe childiſh trifling Things, and am determined to read no other Books but what lead me to a Knowledge of myſelf and *Chriſt Jeſus*. *Search therefore the Scriptures*, my dear Brethren; taſte and ſee how good the Word of God is, and then you will never leave that Heavenly Manna, that Angel's Food, to feed on thoſe dry Husks, that light Bread, thoſe trifling, ſinful Compoſitions, which Man of falſe Taſte delight themſelves in; no, you will then diſdain ſuch poor Entertainment, and bluſh that yourſelves once were fond of it. The Word of God will then be ſweeter than Honey and the Honey-Comb, and dearer than Gold and Silver; your Souls by reading it will be filled, as it were, with Marrow and Fatneſs, and your Hearts inſenſibly moulded into the Spirit of its bleſſed Author; in ſhort, *You will then be guided by God's Wiſdom here, and conducted by the Light of his Divine Word into Glory hereafter.*

SERMON

SERMON VI.

SATAN's DEVICES.

2 CORINTH. ii. 11.

Leaſt Satan ſhould get an Advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his Devices.

THE Occaſion of theſe Words was as follows: In the Church of *Corinth* there was an unhappy Perſon, who had committed ſuch Inceſt, as was not ſo much as named among the *Gentiles*, in taking his Father's Wife; but either on account of his Wealth, Power, or ſome ſuch Reaſons, like many notorious Offenders now-a-days, had not been expoſed to the Cenſures of the Church. St. *Paul* therefore, in his firſt Epiſtle, ſeverely chides them for this Neglect of Diſcipline, and commands them in the Name of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt, When they were gathered together, to deliver ſuch a one,* whoever he was, *to* Satan, *for the Deſtruction of the Fleſh, that his Spirit might be ſaved in*

the Day of the Lord; that is, in one Word, that they ſhould ſolemnly excommunicate him; which was commonly attended with ſome bodily Diſeaſe inflicted by the Devil, under whoſe Power the excommunicated Perſon was for ſome Time delivered. The *Corinthians*, being obedient to the Apoſtle, as dear Children, no ſooner received this Reproof, but they ſubmitted to it, and caſt the offending Party out of the Church. But whilſt they were endeavouring to amend one Fault, they unhappily run into another; and as they formerly had been too mild and remiſs, ſo now they behaved towards him with too much Severity and Reſentment. The Apoſtle therefore, in this Chapter, reproves this, and tells them, that ſufficient to the Offender's Shame, was *The Puniſhment which had been inflicted of many*; that he had now ſuffered enough; and that therefore, leaſt he ſhould be tempted to ſay with *Cain*, *My Puniſhment is greater than I can bear*; or to uſe the Apoſtle's own Words, *Leaſt he ſhould be ſwallowed up with over much Sorrow*; they ought, now he had given Proof of his Repentance, to forgive him, to confirm their Love towards him, and ſo reſtore him in the Spirit of Meekneſs; *Leaſt Satan*, ſays he, *to whoſe Buffetings he was now given, ſhould, by tempting him to Deſpair, get an Advantage over us*; and ſo, by repreſenting you as Mercileſs and Cruel, cauſe that Holy Name to be blaſphemed by which you are called; *for we are not ignorant of his Devices*; we know very well how many ſubtle Ways he has to draw aſide and beguile unguarded unthinking Men.

Thus then ſtand the Words in Relation to the Context; but as *Satan* has many Devices, as

his Quiver is full of other poiſonous Darts, beſides thoſe which he ſhoots at us to drive us to Deſpair, I ſhall conſider them by themſelves, and in the following Diſcourſe ſhall,

I. *Firſt*, Briefly obſerve who we are to underſtand by *Satan*. And,

II. *Secondly*, point out to you, what are the chief Devices he generally makes uſe of, to draw off Converts from *Chriſt*, and preſcribe ſome Remedies againſt them.

The Word *Satan*, in its original Signification, means an Adverſary; and in its general Acceptation, is made uſe of to point out to us the Chief of the Devils; who, for ſtriving to be as God, was caſt down from Heaven, and is now permitted, *with the Reſt of his ſpiritual Wickedneſſes in high Places, to walk up and down, ſeeking whom he may devour*. We hear of him immediately after the Creation, when in the Shape of a Serpent he lay in wait to deceive our firſt Parents.----He is called *Satan* in the Book of *Job*; wherein we are told, that *when the Sons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord*, Satan *alſo came amongſt them*.----As the Scripture alſo ſpeaketh in the Book of *Chronicles, and* Satan *moved* David *to number the People*.---In the *New Teſtament* he goes under different Denominations; ſometimes he is called the *Evil One*, becauſe he is evil in himſelf, and tempts us to Evil.---Sometimes, *the Prince of the Power of the Air*, and *the Spirit that now ruleth in the Children of Diſobedience*, becauſe he reſides chiefly in the Air; and the

whole World, *i. e.* All that are not born of God, are ſaid to lie in him.

He is an Enemy to God and Goodneſs—He is a Hater of all Truth; why elſe did he ſlander God in Paradice? Why did he tell *Eve*, *You ſhall not ſurely die?* And why did he promiſe to give all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glories of them, to *Jeſus Chriſt*, if he would fall down and worſhip him?

He is full of Malice, Envy and Revenge; for what other Motives could induce him to moleſt innocent Man in Paradice? And why is he ſtill ſo Reſtleſs in his Attempts to deſtroy us, who have done him no Wrong?

He is a Being of great Power, as appears in his being able to act on the Imagination of our Bleſſed Lord, ſo as to repreſent to him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glories of them, in a Moment of Time. As alſo in carrying his ſacred Body through the Air up to a Pinnacle of the Temple; and his driving a Herd of Swine ſo furiouſly into the Deep—Nay, ſo great is his Might, that, I doubt not, was God to let him uſe his full Strength, he could turn the Earth upſide down, or pull the Sun from its Orb.

But what he is moſt remarkable for is, *his Subtlety*; for not having Power given from above to take us by Force, he is obliged to wait for Opportunities to betray us, and to catch us by Guile. He therefore made uſe of the Serpent, which was ſubtle above all the Beaſts of the Field, in order to tempt our firſt Parents; and accordingly he is ſaid, in the *New Teſtament*, *to lie in wait to deceive*; and here, in the Words of the Text, the Apoſtle ſays, *We*

are

are not ignorant of his Devices; thereby implying, that we are more in Danger of being ſeduced by his Policy, than over-born by his Power.

From this ſhort Deſcription of *Satan*, we may eaſily judge whoſe Children they are, who love to make a Lie, who ſpeak Evil and ſlander their Neighbour, and whoſe Hearts are full of Pride, Subtlety, Malice, Envy, Revenge and all Uncharitableneſs——Surely they have *Satan* for their Father —— For the Tempers of *Satan* they know; and the Works of *Satan* they do. But were they to ſee either themſelves, or *Satan*, as he is, they could not but be terrified at their own Likeneſs, and abhor themſelves in Duſt and Aſhes.

But to return. The Juſtice of God in ſuffering us to be tempted, is vindicated from theſe Conſiderations—That we are here in a State of Probation—That he has promiſed not to ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear. And not only ſo, but to him that overcometh, he will give a Crown of Life.

The holy Angels themſelves, it ſhould ſeem, were once put to a Trial, whether they would be faithful or not. The firſt *Adam* was tempted even in Paradice. And *Jeſus Chriſt*, that ſecond *Adam*, though he was a Son, yet was carried, as our Repreſentative, by the Holy Spirit into the Wilderneſs to be tempted of the Devil. And there is not one ſingle Spirit in Paradice amongſt the Goodly Fellowſhip of the Prophets, the glorious Company of the Apoſtles, the noble Army of Martyrs, and the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, who, when on Earth, was not

aſſulted by the fiery Darts of that wicked one, *the Devil.*

What then has been the common Lot of all God's Children, of the Angels, nay, of the Eternal Son of God himſelf, we muſt not think to be exempted from. No, 'tis ſufficient if we are made perfect through Temptations, as they were.—And therefore, ſince we cannot but be tempted, unleſs we could unmake Human Nature, inſtead of repining at our Condition, we ſhould rather be enquiring, at what Time of our Lives *Satan* moſt violently aſſaults us? And what thoſe Devices are, which he commonly makes uſe of, in order *to get an Advantage over us?*

As to the *firſt* Queſtion, I anſwer, we muſt expect to be tempted by him, in ſome Degree or other, all our Lives long. — For this Life being a continual Warfare, we muſt never expect to have Reſt from our Spiritual Adverſary, the Devil; or ſay, our Combat with him is finiſhed, till, with our Bleſſed Maſter, we bow down our Heads, and give up the Ghoſt.

But ſince the Time of our Converſion, or firſt entring upon the Spiritual Life, is the moſt critical Time at which he moſt violently beſets us, as well knowing, if he can prevent our ſetting out, he can lead us Captive at his Will; and ſince the wiſe Son of *Sirach* particularly warns us, when we are going to ſerve the Lord, to prepare our Souls for Temptation, I ſhall, in anſwer to the other Queſtion, paſs on to the

Second general Thing propoſed; and point out, and withal give ſome Directions how to overcome thoſe Devices, which *Satan* generally

generally makes uſe of at our firſt Converſion, in order *to get an Advantage over us.*

But before I proceed to do this, let me obſerve to you, that whatſoever ſhall be delivered in the following Diſcourſe is only deſigned for ſuch as have actually entred upon the Divine Life; and not for carnal almoſt Chriſtians, who have the Form of Godlineſs, but never yet felt the Power of it in their Hearts. This being premiſed,

The *firſt* Device I ſhall mention which *Satan* makes uſe of, is, *to drive us to Deſpair.*

When God the Father awakens a Sinner by the Terrors of the Law, and by his Holy Spirit convinceth him of Sin, in order to lead him to *Chriſt*, and ſhew him the Neceſſity of a Redeemer; then *Satan* generally ſtrikes in, and aggravates thoſe Convictions to ſuch a Degree, as to make the Sinner doubt of finding Mercy through the Mediator.

Thus, in all his Temptations of the Holy *Jeſus*, he chiefly aimed to make him queſtion, whether he was the Son of God? *If thou be the Son of God*, ſays he, *do ſo and ſo.* With many ſuch deſponding Thoughts, no doubt, he filled the Heart of the great St. *Paul*, when he continued three Days neither eating Bread or drinking Water; and therefore he ſpeaks by Experience, when he ſays, in the Words of the Text, *We are not ignorant of his Devices*, how he will endeavour to drive the inceſtuous Perſon to Deſpair.

But let not any of you be influenced by him to deſpair of finding Mercy. For it is not the Greatneſs or Number of our Crimes, but Impenitence and Unbelief, that will prove our Ruin: No, *were our Sins more in Number than the Hairs of our Head, or of a deeper Die than the brighteſt Scarlet; yet the Merits of the Death of Jeſus Chriſt, are infinitely greater, and Faith in his Blood ſhall make them white as Snow.*

Anſwer always therefore his deſpairing Suggeſtions, as your bleſſed Lord did, with an, *It is written.* Tell him you know that your Redeemer liveth, ever to make Interceſſion for you; that the Lord hath received from him double for all your Crimes: And though you have ſinned much, that is no Reaſon why you ſhould deſpair, but only why you ſhould love much, having ſo much forgiven.

Another Device that *Satan* generally makes uſe of, *to get an Advantage over young Converts*, is, to tempt them to preſume, and to think more highly of themſelves than they ought to think.

When a Perſon has for ſome little Time taſted the good Word of Life, and felt the Powers of the World to come, he is commonly (as indeed well he may) moſt highly tranſported with that ſudden Change he finds in himſelf. But then *Satan* will not be wanting at ſuch a Time, to puff him up with a high Conceit of his own Attainments, as if he was ſome great Perſon; and will tempt him to ſet at nought his Brethren, as though he was holier than they.

Take

Take heed therefore, and let us beware of this Device of our ſpiritual Adverſary; for as before Honour is Humility, ſo a haughty Spirit generally goes before a Fall; and God is obliged, when under ſuch Circumſtances, to ſend us ſome humbling Viſitation, or permit us to fall, as he did *Peter*, into ſome grievous Sin, that we may learn not to be too high minded.

To check therefore all Suggeſtions to Spiritual Pride, let us conſider, that we did not apprehend *Chriſt*, but were apprehended of him.——That we have nothing but what we have received.—That the free Grace of God has alone made the Difference between us and others; and, was God to leave us to the Deceitfulneſs of our own Hearts but one Moment, we ſhould become weak and wicked, like other Men—We ſhould farther conſider, that being proud of Grace, is the moſt ready Way to looſe it.—For God reſiſteth the Proud, and giveth more Grace only to the Humble. And, were we endowed with the Perfections of *Seraphims*; yet, if we were proud of thoſe Perfections, they would but render us more accompliſhed Devils.—Above all, we may learn of *Jeſus Chriſt*, to be lowly in Heart. That his Grace, through the Subtlety and Deceivableneſs of *Satan*, may not be our Poiſon. But that we may always think ſoberly of ourſelves, as we ought to think.

A *third* Device I ſhall mention, which *Satan* generally makes uſe of *to get an Advantage over us*, is to tempt us to Uneaſineſs, and to have hard Thoughts of God, when we are under Deadneſs and Dryneſs in Prayer.

Though

Though this is a Term not underſtood by the Natural Man; yet, whoſoever there are amongſt you, who have paſſed through the Pangs of the *New Birth*, they know full well what I mean, when I talk of Deadneſs and Dryneſs in Prayer. And, I doubt not, but many of you, amongſt whom I am now preaching the Kingdom of God, are at this very Time labouring under it.

For when Perſons are firſt awakened to the Divine Life, becauſe Grace is weak and Nature ſtrong, God is often pleaſed to vouchſafe them ſome extraordinary Illuminations of his Holy Spirit; but when they are grown to be more perfect Men in *Chriſt*, then he frequently ſeems to leave them to themſelves; and not only ſo, but permits a horrible Deadneſs and Dread to overwhelm them; at which Times *Satan* will not be wanting to vex and tempt them to Impatience, to the great Diſcomfort of their Souls.

But be not afraid; for this is no more than your Bleſſed Redeemer, that Spotleſs Lamb of God, has underwent before you: Witneſs his bitter Agony in the Garden, when his Soul was exceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death.——When he ſweat great Drops of Blood, falling on the Ground; when the Senſe of the Divinity was withdrawn from him; and *Satan*, in all Probability, was permitted, to ſet all his Terrors in Array before him.

Rejoyce therefore, my Brethren, when you fall into the like Circumſtances; as knowing, that you are therein Partakers of the Sufferings of *Jeſus Chriſt*.——Conſider, that it is neceſſary ſuch inward Trials ſhould come, to wean us off the Love of ſenſible Devotion, and to

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teach us to follow *Chriſt*, not merely for his Loaves, but out of a Principle of Love and Obedience.—In Patience therefore poſſeſs your Souls, and be not terrifieth by *Satan*'s Suggeſtions.—Still perſevere in ſeeking *Jeſus* in the Uſe of Means, though it be Sorrowing, and though through Benumneſs and Barrenneſs of Soul, you may go mourning all the Day long.—Conſider that the Spouſe is with you, though behind the Curtain; as he was with *Mary*, at the Sepulchre, though ſhe knew it not.——That he has withdrawn but for a little while, to make his Viſit more welcome.——That though he may now ſeem to frown and look back on you, as he did on the *Syrophœnician* Woman; yet if you, like her, cry out ſo much the more earneſtly, *Jeſus, thou Son of* David, *have Mercy on us*; it will be made known unto you again, either in the Temple, by breaking of Bread, or ſome other Way.

But amongſt all the Devices, that *Satan* makes uſe of *to get an Advantage over us*, there is none in which he is more Succeſsful, or by which he grieves the Children of God worſe, than that

Fourth Device I am going to mention, *viz.* His troubling you with blaſphemous, prophane, impious, unbelieving Thoughts; and ſometimes to ſuch a Degree, that they are as tormenting as the Wreck.

Some indeed are apt to impute all ſuch evil Thoughts to a Diſorder of Body.—But thoſe, who know any thing of the Spiritual Life, can inform you with greater Certainty, that, for the generality, they proceed from that wicked one

one, *the Devil*; who, no doubt, has Power given him from above, as well now as formerly, to diſorder the Body, as he did *Job*'s; that he may, with the more Secrecy and Succeſs work upon, ruffle, and torment the Soul.

You that have felt the fiery Darts, can ſubſcribe to the Truth of this, and by fatal Experience can tell, how often he has bid you, *Curſe God and die*, and darted into your Thoughts a thouſand blaſphemous Suggeſtions, even in your moſt ſecret and ſolemn Retirements; the bare looking back on which makes your very Hearts to tremble.

I appeal to your own Conſciences; have not ſome of you, when you have been lifting up Holy Hands in Prayer, been peſtered with ſuch a Croud of the moſt horrid Inſinuations, that you have been often tempted to riſe off from your Knees, and been made believe your Prayers were an Abomination to the Lord? Nay, when with the reſt of our Chriſtian Brethren, you have crouded round the Holy Table, and taken the ſacred Symbols of *Chriſt*'s moſt Bleſſed Body and Blood into your Hands, inſtead af remembring the Death of your Saviour, have you not been employed in driving out evil Thoughts, as *Abraham* was in driving away the Birds, that came to devour his Sacrifice; and thereby been terrified, leaſt you have eat and drank your own Damnation?

But marvel not, as though ſome ſtrange Thing happened unto you; for this has been the common Lot of all God's Children.—We read even in *Job*'s Time, *That when the Sons of God came to appear before their Maker*, i. e.

at

at publick Worſhip, *Satan alſo came amongſt them, to diſturb their Devotions.*

And think not that God is angry with you for theſe diſtracting, though ever ſo blaſphemous, Thoughts: No, he knows it is not you, but *Satan* working in you; and therefore, notwithſtanding he may be diſpleaſed with, and certainly will puniſh him; yet he will both pity and reward you. And though it be difficult to make Perſons in your Circumſtances to believe ſo; yet, I doubt not, but you are more acceptable to God, when performing your holy Duties in the midſt of ſuch involuntary Diſtractions, than when you are wrapped up by ſenſible Devotion, as it were, into the third Heavens.——For you are then ſuffering, as well as doing the Will of God at the ſame Time; and, like *Nehemiah*'s Servants at the Building of the Temple, are holding a Trowel in the one Hand, and a Sword in the other——But be not you driven from the uſe of any Ordinance whatever, on account of thoſe abominable Suggeſtions; for then you let *Satan* get his deſired Advantage over you; it being his chief Deſign, by theſe Thoughts, to make you fall out with the Means of Grace; and to tempt you to believe, you do not pleaſe God, for no other Reaſon, than becauſe you do not pleaſe yourſelves—Rather perſevere in that Uſe of the holy Communion eſpecially, and all other Means whatever; and when theſe Temptations have wrought that Reſignation in you, for which they were permitted, God will viſit you with freſh Tokens of his Love, as he met *Abraham*, when he returned from the Slaughter of the five Kings; and will ſend an Angel from Heaven,

Heaven, as he did to his Son, on Purpoſe to ſtrengthen you.

Hitherto we have only obſerved ſuch Devices as *Satan* makes uſe of immediately by himſelf; but there is a

Fifth I ſhall mention, that is not the leaſt, *viz.* Tempting us by our carnal Friends and Relations.

This is one of the moſt common, as well as moſt artful Devices he makes uſe of to draw young Converts from God; for when he cannot prevail over them by himſelf, he will try what he can do by the Influence and Mediation of others.

Thus he tempted *Eve*, that ſhe might tempt *Adam*.—Thus he ſtirred up *Job*'s Wife, to bid him *Curſe God and die*.—And thus he made uſe of *Peter*'s Tongue, to perſuade our Bleſſed Lord *To ſpare himſelf*, and thereby decline thoſe Sufferings, by which alone we could be preſerved from ſuffering the Vengeance of Eternal Fire. And thus, in theſe laſt Days, he often ſtirs up our moſt powerful Friends and deareſt Intimates, to diſſuade us from going in that narrow Way, which alone leadeth unto Life eternal.

But our Bleſſed Lord has furniſhed us with a ſufficient Anſwer to all ſuch Suggeſtions—*Get you behind me, my Adverſaries*; for otherwiſe they will be an Offence unto you; and the only Reaſon why they give ſuch Advice is, becauſe they ſavour not the Things that be of God, but the Things that be of Men.

Whoever

Whoever therefore among you are reſolved to ſerve the Lord, prepare your Souls for many ſuch Temptations as theſe; for it is neceſſary that ſuch Offences ſhould come, to try your Sincerity, to teach us to ceaſe from Man, and to ſee if we will forſake all to follow *Chriſt*.

Indeed our Moderniſers of Chriſtianity would perſwade us, that the Goſpel was calculated only for about two hundred Years; and that now there is no need of hating Father and Mother, or being perſecuted for the Sake of *Chriſt* and his Goſpel.

But ſuch Perſons err, not knowing the Scriptures, and the Power of Godlineſs in their Hearts; for whoſoever receives the Love of God in the Truth of it, will find, that *Chriſt* came to ſend not Peace, but a Sword upon Earth, as much now as ever.— That the Father-in-law ſhall be againſt the Daughter-in-law, in theſe latter, as well as in the primitive Times; and that if we will live godly in *Chriſt Jeſus*, we muſt, as then, ſo now, from carnal Friends and Relations, ſuffer Perſecution.

But the Devil has another Device, as dangerous as any of the former,——*i. e.* By not tempting us at all, or rather by withdrawing himſelf for a while, in order to come upon us at an Hour, when we think not of it.

Thus it is ſaid, that he left *Jeſus Chriſt* only for a Seaſon; and our Bleſſed Lord has bid us to watch and pray always, that we enter not into Temptation; thereby implying,

ing, that *Satan*, whether we think of it or not, is always ſeeking how he may devour us.

If we would therefore behave like good Soldiers of *Jeſus Chriſt*, we muſt be always upon our guard, and never pretend to lay down our Spiritual Weapons of Prayer and Watching, till our Warfare is accompliſhed by Death; for if we do, our ſpiritual *Amaleck* will quickly prevail againſt us. What if he has left us? It is only for a Seaſon; yet, a little while and, like a roaring Lion, with double Fury, he will break out upon us again.——So great a Coward as the Devil is, he ſeldom leaves us at the firſt Onſet.——As he followed our Bleſſed Lord with one Temptation after another, ſo will he treat his Servants.——And the Reaſon why he does not renew his Attacks, is ſometimes, becauſe God knows we are yet weak and unable to bear them,——ſometimes, becauſe our grand Adverſary thinks to beſet us at a more convenient Seaſon.

Watch carefully therefore over thy Heart, O Chriſtian, and whenever thou perceiveſt thyſelf to be falling into a ſpiritual Slumber, ſay to it, as *Chriſt* to his Diſciples, *Ariſe my Soul, why ſleepeſt thou?* Awake, awake; put on Strength, watch and pray, or otherwiſe the *Philiſtines* will be upon thee, and lead thee whether thou wouldſt not. Alas! Is this Life a Time to lay down and ſlumber in? Ariſe, and call upon thy God; thy ſpiritual Enemy is not dead, but lurketh in ſome ſecret Place, ſeeking a convenient Opportunity how he may betray thee. If thou ceaſeſt to ſtrive with him, thou ceaſeſt to be a Friend of God;

thou

thou ceaſeſt to go in the narrow Way, which leadeth unto Life.

Thus have I endeavoured to point out to you ſome of thoſe Devices, that *Satan* generally makes uſe of, *to get an Advantage over us*; many others there are, no doubt, which he often makes uſe of.

But theſe on account of my Youth and Want of Experience, I cannot yet appriſe you of; they, who have been liſted for Years in their Maſter's Service, and fought under his Banner againſt our ſpiritual *Amaleck*, are able to diſcover more of his Artifices; and being tempted in all Things, like unto their Brethren, can in all things adviſe and ſuccour thoſe that are tempted.

In the mean while, let me exhort my young Fellow-Soldiers, who, like myſelf, are but juſt entring the Field, and for whoſe Sake this was written, not to be diſcouraged at the fiery Trial wherewith they muſt be tried, if they would be found faithful Servants of *Jeſus Chriſt*. You ſee, my dearly beloved Brethren, by what has been delivered, that our Way through the Wilderneſs of this World to the Heavenly *Canaan* is beſet with Thorns, and that there are the Sons of *Anack* to be grappled with, ere you can poſſeſs the promiſed Land. But let not theſe, like ſo many falſe Spies, diſcourage you from *going up to fight the Lord's Battles*, but ſay with *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, *Nay, but we will go up, for we are able to conquer them*. *Jeſus Chriſt*, that Captain of our Salvation, has in our ſtead, and as our Repreſentative, baffled the

the grand Enemy of Mankind, and we have nothing to do, but manfully to fight under his Banner, and to go on from conquering to conquer. Our Glory does not conſiſt in being exempted from, but in enduring Temptations. *Bleſſed is the Man*, ſays the Apoſtle, *that endureth Temptation*; and again, *Brethren, count it all Joy, when you fall into divers Temptations:* And in that perfect Form our bleſſed Lord has preſcribed us, we are taught to pray, not ſo much to be delivered from all Temptation, as from the Evil of it. No, whilſt we are on this Side Eternity, it muſt needs be that Temptations come; and, no doubt, *Satan* has deſired *to have all of us, to ſift us as Wheat.* But wherefore ſhould we fear? For he that is for us, is by far more powerful, than all that are againſt us. *Jeſus Chriſt, our great High Prieſt, is exalted to the right Hand of God, and there ſitteth to make Interceſſion for us, that our Faith fail not.*

Since then *Chriſt* is praying, whom ſhould we fear? And ſince he has promiſed to make us more than Conquerors, of whom ſhould we be afraid? No, though an Hoſt of Devils are ſet in Array againſt us, let us not be afraid; and though there ſhould riſe up the hotteſt Perſecution againſt us, yet let us put our Truſt in God.——What though *Satan*, and the Reſt of his apoſtate Spirits, are powerful, when compared with us; yet, if put in Competition with the Almighty, they are as weak as the meaneſt Worms. God has them all reſerved in Chains of Darkneſs unto the Judgment of the great Day.—So far as he permits them, they

they ſhall go, but no farther; and where he pleaſes, there ſhall their proud malicious Deſigns be ſtayed. We read in the Goſpel, that *though a Legion of them poſſeſſed one Man, yet they could not deſtroy him*; nor could they ſo much as enter into a Swine, without firſt having Leave given them from above. It is true, we often find they foil us, when we are aſſaulted by them; but let us be ſtrong, and very courageons: for, though they bruiſe our Heels, we ſhall at length bruiſe their Heads.—Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come; and then we ſhall ſee all our ſpiritual Enemies put under our Feet.—What if they do come out againſt us, like ſo many great *Goliah*'s; yet, if we can go forth, as the ſtrippling *David*, in the Name and Strength of the Lord of Hoſts, we may ſay, *Oh Satan, where is thy Power? Oh fallen Spirits, where is your Victory?*

Once more therefore, and to conclude, let us be ſtrong, and very courageous, and let us put on the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to ſtand againſt the fiery Darts of the wicked one. Let us renounce ourſelves, and the World, and then we ſhall take away the Armour in which he truſteth, and he will find nothing in us for his Temptations to work upon. We ſhall then prevent his malicious Deſigns, and being willing to ſuffer ourſelves, ſhall need leſs Sufferings to be ſent us from above. *Let us have our Loins girt about with Truth; and for an Helmet, the Hope of Salvation*; praying always with all Manner of Supplication. Above all things, *Let us take the Sword of the Spirit,*

rit, which is the Word of God, and *the Shield of Faith*, looking always to *Jeſus*, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who for the Joy that was ſet before him, endureth the Pain, deſpiſing the Shame, and is now ſet down at the Right Hand of God.

To which happy Place may God of his infinite Mercy tranſlate us all, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons and One Eternal God, be all Honour, and Glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON VII.

The Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, the beſt Knowledge.

1 COR. ii. 2.

I determined not to know any Thing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.

THE Perſons to whom theſe Words were written, were the Members of the Church of *Corinth*; who, as appears by the foregoing Chapter, were not only divided into different Sects, by one ſaying, *I am of* Paul, and another, *I am of* Apollos; but alſo had many amongſt them, who were ſo full of the Wiſdom of this World, and ſo wiſe in their own Eyes, that they ſet at nought the Simplicity of the Goſpel, and accounted the Apoſtle's Preaching Fooliſhneſs.

Never had the Apoſtle more Need of the Wiſdom of the Serpent, mingled with the Innocency of the Dove, than now. What is the Sum of all his Wiſdom, he tells them, in the Words of the Text, *I determined not to know any Thing amongſt you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

A Reſolution this, worthy the great St. *Paul*, and no leſs worthy, no leſs neceſſary for every Miniſter, and every Diſciple of *Chriſt*, to make always, even unto the End of the World.

In the following Diſcourſe, I ſhall

Firſt explain what is meant by *not knowing any Thing, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

Secondly, Give ſome Reaſons why every Chriſtian ſhould determine not to know any Thing elſe. And

Thirdly, Conclude with a general Exhortation to put this Determination into Practice.

And *Firſt*, I am to explain what is meant by *not knowing any Thing, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

By *Jeſus Chriſt*, we are to underſtand *The Eternal Son of God.* He is called *Jeſus*, *i. e.* A *Saviour*, becauſe he was to ſave us from the Guilt and Power of our Sins; and, like *Joſhua*, by whom he was remarkably typified, to lead God's Spiritual *Iſrael* through the Wilderneſs of this World, to the heavenly *Canaan*, the promiſed Inheritance of the Children of God.

He

He is called *Chriſt*, which ſignifies *Anointed*, becauſe he was anointed by the Holy Ghoſt at his Baptiſm, to be a Prophet to inſtruct, a Prieſt to make an Atonement for, and a King to govern and protect his Church.—And he was crucified, or hung (O ſtupenduous Love!) till he was dead upon the Croſs, that he might become a Curſe for us: For it is written, *Curſed is every Man that hangeth upon a Tree.*

The Foundation or firſt Cauſe of his Suffering, was our Fall in *Adam*, in whom, as the living Oracles of God declare, *We all died*, *i. e.* His Sin was imputed to us all. It pleaſed God, after he had ſpoken the World into Being, to create Man after his own Divine Image, to breathe into him the Breath of Life, and to place him as our Repreſentative in the Garden of *Eden*.

But he being left to his own free Will, eat of the forbidden Fruit, notwithſtanding God had told him, *the Day in which he eat thereof, he ſhould ſurely die*; and thereby he, with his whole Poſterity, in whoſe Name he acted, became liable to the Wrath of God, and ſunk into a ſpiritual Death.

But behold the Goodneſs, as well as the Severity of God! For no ſooner had Man been convicted as a Sinner, but lo! a Saviour is revealed to him, under the Character of the Seed of the Woman, the Merits of whoſe Sacrifice was then immediately to take Place, and who ſhould, in the Fulneſs of Time, by ſuffering Death, ſatisfy for the Guilt we had contracted; and by becoming a Principle of new Life in us, ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head, deſtroy the Power of the Devil within us, and thereby

reſtore us to a better State than that in which we were at firſt created.

This is the plain Scriptural Account of that Myſtery of Godlineſs God manifeſted in the Fleſh; and to this our own Hearts, unleſs blinded by the God of this World, cannot but yield an immediate Aſſent.

For, let us but ſearch our own Hearts, and ask ourſelves if we could create our own Children, whether or not we would not create them with a leſs Mixture of Good and Evil than we find in ourſelves? Suppoſing God then only to have our Goodneſs, he could not, at firſt, make us ſo ſinful, ſo polluted as we are. But ſuppoſing him to be as he is, infinitely good, or Goodneſs itſelf, then it is abſolutely impoſſible that he ſhould create any thing but what is like himſelf, perfect, entire, laking nothing.— Man then could not come out of the Hands of his Maker ſo miſerably blind and naked, with ſuch a Mixture of the Beaſt and Devil, as he finds now in himſelf, but muſt have fallen from what he was; and as it does not ſuit with the Goodneſs and Juſtice of God, to puniſh the whole Race of Mankind with theſe Diſorders merely for nothing; and ſince Men bring theſe Diſorders into the World with them; it follows, that as they could not ſin themſelves, being yet unborn, ſome other Man's Sin muſt have been imputed to them; from whence, as from a Fountain, all theſe Evils flow.

I know this Doctrine of our original Sin, or Fall in *Adam*, is eſteemed Fooliſhneſs by the wiſe Diſputer of this World, who will reply, *How does it ſuit with the Goodneſs of God to impute one Man's Sin to an innocent Poſterity?*

But

But has it not been proved to a Demonſtration, that it is ſo? And therefore, ſuppoſing we cannot reconcile it to our ſhallow Comprehenſions, that is no Argument at all: For if it appears that God has done a Thing, we may be ſure it is right, whether we can ſee the Reaſons for it or not.

But this is entirely cleared up by what was ſaid before, that no ſooner was the Sin imputed, but a Mediator was revealed; ſo that as in *Adam* all died, even ſo in *Chriſt* all might be made alive.

That *Chriſt* then, this God incarnate, who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, that he might be freed from the Guilt of our original Sin; who was born of the Virgin *Mary*, that he might be the Seed of the Woman only; who ſuffered under *Pontius Pilate*, a *Gentile* Governor, to fulfil thoſe Propheſies, which ſignified what Death he ſhould die—This ſame *Jeſus*, who was crucified in Weakneſs, but raiſed in Power, is that Divine Perſon, that *Immanuel*, that *God with us*, whom we preach, in whom you believe, and whom alone the Apoſtle, in the Text, was determined to know.

By which Word *Know*, we are not to underſtand a bare hiſtorical Knowledge (for to know that *Chriſt* was crucified by his Enemies at *Jeruſalem* in this Manner only, will do us no more Service than to know that *Cæſar* was inhumanly butchered by his Friends at *Rome*) but the Word *Know*, means to know, ſo as to approve of him, as when *Chriſt* ſays, *Verily, I know you not*; i. e. *I know you not, ſo as to approve of you*—It ſignifies to know him, ſo as to embrace him in all his Offices;—to take him to be our Prophet, Prieſt,

and King; ſo as to give up ourſelves wholly to be inſtructed, ſaved, and governed by him—It implies an experimental Knowledge of his Crucifixion, ſo as to *feel* the Power of it, and be crucified unto the World, as the Apoſtle explains himſelf in the Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, where he ſays, *He counts all Things but Dung and Droſs that he might know him, and the Power of his Reſurrection.*

This Knowledge the Apoſtle was ſo ſwallowed up in, that he was determined not to know any Thing elſe; that is, He was reſolved to make that his only Study,—the governing Principle of his Life, the Point and End in which all his Thoughts, Words, and Actions, ſhould center.

Secondly, I paſs on to give ſome Reaſons why every Chriſtian ſhould, with the Apoſtle, determine *not to know any Thing, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

And, *Firſt*, Without this, our Perſons will not be accepted in the Sight of God. This, and conſequently this only, is Life Eternal, ſays our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, *to know thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt ſent.* As alſo St. *Peter* ſays, *There is now no other Name given under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved, but that of Jeſus Chriſt.*

Some indeed, may pleaſe themſelves in knowing the World, others boaſt themſelves in the Knowledge of a Multitude of Languages; but could we ſpeak with the Tongue of Men and Angels, or did we know the Number of the Stars, and could call them all by their Names, yet, without

without this experimental Knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*, it would profit us nothing.

The former, indeed, may procure us a little Honour, which cometh of Man; but the latter only can render us acceptable in the Sight of God: For, if we are ignorant of *Chriſt*, God will be to us a conſuming Fire.

Chriſt is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one cometh to the Father but through him—He is the Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World, and none ever were, or ever will be received up into Glory, but by an experimental Application of his Merits to their Hearts.

We might as well think to rebuild the Tower of *Babel*, or reach Heaven with our Hands, as to imagine to enter therein by any other Door than that of *the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt*.

Other Knowledge may make you wiſe in your own Eyes, and puff you up; but this alone edifieth, and maketh wiſe unto Salvation.

As the meaneſt Chriſtian, if he knows but this, though he know nothing elſe, will be accepted; ſo the greateſt Maſter in *Iſrael*, the moſt Letter-learned Teacher, without this, will be rejected. His Philoſophy is mere Nonſenſe, his Wiſdom mere Fooliſhneſs in the Sight of God.

The Author of the Words now before us, was a remarkable Inſtance of this; never, perhaps, was a greater Scholar, in all what the World calls fine Learning, than he: For he was bred up up at the Feet of *Gamaliel*, and profited in the Knowledge of Books, as well as in the *Jewiſh* Religion, above many of his Equals, as appears by the Language, Rhetorick, and Spirit of his Writings; and yet, when he came to know what

it was to be a Chriſtian, *He accounted all Things but Loſs, ſo he might win Chriſt.* And, though he was now at *Corinth*, that Seat of polite Learning, yet he was abſolutely determined not to know any Thing, to make nothing his Study, but what taught him *to know Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

Hence then, appears the Folly of thoſe who ſpend their whole Lives in heaping up other Knowledge; and inſtead of ſearching the Scriptures, which teſtify of *Jeſus Chriſt*, and are alone able to make them wiſe unto Salvation, diſquiet themſelves in a Purſuit after the Knowledge of ſuch Things, as when known, concern them no more, than to know that a Bird dropped a Feather upon one of the *Pyrenæan* Mountains.

Hence it is, that ſo many, who profeſs themſelves wiſe, becauſe they can diſpute of the Cauſes and Effects, the moral Fitneſs and Unfitneſs of Things, appear mere Fools in the Things of God; ſo that when you come to converſe with them about the great Work of Redemption wrought out for us by *Jeſus Chriſt*, of his being a Propitiation for our Sins, and a Principle of new Life to our Souls, they are quite ignorant of the whole Matter, and prove, to a Demonſtration, that, with all their Learning, they know nothing yet as they ought to know.

But, good God! how muſt it ſurpriſe a Man, when the Moſt High is about to take away his Soul, to think that he has paſſed for a wiſe Man, and a learned Diſputer in this World, and yet is left deſtitute of that Knowledge which alone can make him appear with Boldneſs before the Judgment-Seat of *Jeſus Chriſt?* How muſt it grieve him,

him, in a future State, to ſee others, whom he deſpiſed as unlearned and illiterate Men, becauſe they experimentally *knew Chriſt, and him crucified*, exalted to the Right Hand of God, and himſelf, with all his fine Accompliſhments, becauſe he knew every Thing, perhaps, but *Chriſt*, thruſt down into Hell?

Well might the Apoſtle, in a holy Triumph cry out, *Where is the Wiſe? Where is the Scribe? Where is the Diſputer of this World?* For, God will then make fooliſh the Wiſdom of this World, and bring to nought the Wiſdom of thoſe who were ſo knowing in their own Eyes.

I made this Digreſſion from the main Point before us, not to condemn or deny human Literature, but to ſhew, that it ought to be uſed only in Subordination to divine; and that a Chriſtian, if the holy Spirit guided the Pen of the Apoſtle when he wrote this Epiſtle, ought to ſtudy no Books, but ſuch as lead him into a farther *Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.*

And there is the more Reaſon for this, becauſe of the great Miſchief the contrary Practice has done to the Church of God: For, what was it but this Learning, or rather this Ignorance, that kept ſo many of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* from a ſaving Knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt?* And what is it, but this human Wiſdom, this Science, falſly ſo called, that blinds the Underſtanding, and corrupts the Hearts of ſo many modern Unbelievers, and makes them unwilling to ſubmit to the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith in *Chriſt Jeſus?*

But, *Secondly*, Without this Knowledge our Performances, as well as Perſons, will not be acceptable in the Sight of God.

Through Faith, ſays the Apoſtle, that is, Through a lively Faith in a Mediator hereafter to come, Abel *offer'd a more acceptable Sacrifice than* Cain. And it is through a like Faith, or an experimental Knowledge of the ſame divine Mediator, that our Sacrifices of Prayer, Praiſe, and Thankſgivings, come up as Incenſe before the Throne of Grace.

Two Perſons may go up to the Temple to pray; but he only will return home juſtified, who, in the Language of our Collects, ſincerely offers up his Prayers through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord.

For it is this great Atonement, this all-ſufficient Sacrifice, which alone can give us Boldneſs to approach with our Prayers to the Holy of Holies; and he that preſumes to go without this, acts *Korah*'s Crime over again--offers God ſtrange Fire, and, conſequently, will be rejected by him.

Farther, as our Devotions to God will not, ſo neither, without this Knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt*, will our Acts of Charity to Men be accepted by him.

For did we give all our Goods to feed the Poor, and yet were deſtitute of this Knowledge, it would profit us nothing.

This our Bleſſed Lord himſelf intimates in the 25th of St. *Matthew*, where he tells thoſe that had been rich in good Works, *That in as much as they did it unto one of the leaſt of his Brethren, they did it unto him.* From whence we may plainly infer, that it is ſeeing *Chriſt* in his Members, and doing good to them out of an experimental Knowledge of his Love to us, that alone

will

will render our Alms-Deeds rewardable at the laſt Day.

Laſtly, As neither our Acts of Piety nor Charity, ſo neither will our civil nor moral Actions be acceptable to God without this experimental Knowledge of *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Our modern Pretenders to Reaſon, indeed, ſet up another Principle to act from; they talk, I know not what, "Of doing moral and civil "Duties of Life, from the moral Fitneſs and "Unfitneſs of Things." But ſuch Men are blind, however they may pretend to ſee; and going thus about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, are utterly ignorant of the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith in *Chriſt Jeſus*.

For though we grant, that Morality is a ſubſtantial Part of Chriſtianity, and that *Chriſt* came not to deſtroy, *i. e.* not to take off the Force of the moral Law, as a Rule of Action, but to explain, and ſo fulfil it; yet we affirm, that our moral and civil Actions are now no farther acceptable in the Sight of God the Father, than as they proceed from a Principle of a new Nature, and an experimental Knowledge of, or vital Faith in his dear Son.

For the Death of *Jeſus Chriſt* has turned our whole Lives into one continued Sacrifice; and whether we eat or drink, whether we pray to God, or do any Thing to Man, it muſt all be done out of a Love for, and Knowledge of him who died and roſe again, to render all, even our moſt ordinary Deeds, acceptable in the Sight of God.

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If we live by this Principle, if *Chriſt* be the *Alpha* and *Omega* of all our Actions, then our moſt indifferent ones are acceptable Sacrifices; but if this Principle be wanting, our moſt pompous Services avail nothing. We are but ſpiritual Idolaters — we ſacrifice to our own Net — we make an Idol of ourſelves, by making ourſelves, and not *Chriſt*, the End of our Actions; and therefore ſuch Actions are ſo far from being accepted by God, that, according to the Language of one of the Articles of our Church, *We doubt not but they have the Nature of Sin, becauſe they ſpring not from an experimental Faith in, and Knowledge of* Jeſus Chriſt.

Were we not fallen Creatures, we might then act, perhaps, from other Principles; but ſince we are fallen out of *God* in *Adam*, and are reſtored again only by the Death of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Face of Things is entirely changed, and all we think, ſpeak, or do, is only accepted in, and through him.

Juſtly, therefore, may I, in the

Third and *laſt* Place, exhort you, to put the Apoſtle's Reſolution in Practice, and beſeech you with him to determine, *Not to know any Thing, ſave* Jeſus Chriſt, *and him crucified.*

I ſay, *determine*; for unleſs you ſit down firſt, and count the Coſt, and from a well-grounded Conviction of the Excellency of this above all other Knowledge whatſoever, reſolve to make this your chief Study, your only End, your one Thing needful, every frivolous Temptation will draw you aſide from the Purſuit after it.

Your

Your Friends and carnal Acquaintance, and, above all, your grand Adverſary the Devil, will be perſuading you to determine not to know any Thing, but how to lay up Goods for many Years,—to get a Knowledge and Taſte of the Pomps and Vanities of this wicked World;—But do you determine not to follow, or be led by them—and the more they perſuade you to know other Things, the more do you *determine not to know any Thing, ſave* Jeſus Chriſt, *and him crucified*—For, *this Knowledge never faileth; But whether they be Riches, they ſhall fail—Whether they be Pomps, they ſhall ceaſe—Whether they be Vanities, they ſhall fade away—But the Knowledge of* Jeſus Chriſt, *and him crucified, abideth for ever.*

Whatever, therefore, you are ignorant of, be not ignorant of this—if you *know* Chriſt, *and him crucified*, you know enough to make you happy, ſuppoſing you know nothing elſe; and, without this, all your other Knowledge cannot keep you from being everlaſtingly miſerable.

Value not then the Contempt of Friends, which you muſt neceſſarily meet with upon your open Profeſſion to act according to this Determination. For your Maſter, whoſe you are, was deſpiſed before you; and all that will know nothing elſe but *Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*, muſt, in ſome Degree or other, ſuffer Perſecution.

It is neceſſary that Offences ſhould come, to try what is in our Hearts, and whether we will be faithful Soldiers of *Jeſus Chriſt*, or not.

Dare we then to confeſs our Bleſſed Maſter before Men, and to ſhine as Lights in the World amidſt a crooked and perverſe Generation? Let

us not to be content with following him afar off; for then we ſhall, as *Peter* did, ſoon deny him; but let us be altogether Chriſtians, and let our Speech, and all our Actions, betray to the World whoſe Diſciples we are, and that we have indeed determined *not to know any Thing, ſave* Jeſus Chriſt, *and him crucified.* O then! well will it be with us, and happy, unſpeakably happy ſhall we be, even here,---and what is infinitely better, when others that deſpiſed us, ſhall be calling for the Mountains to fall on them, and the Hills to cover them, we ſhall be exalted to ſit down on the Right Hand of God, and ſhine as the Sun in the Firmament in the Kingdom of our moſt adorable Redeemer, for ever and ever.

Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.

SERMON

SERMON VIII.

The heinous SIN of DRUNKENNESS.

EPHESIANS v. 18.

Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Exceſs; but be filled with the Spirit.

THE Perſons to whom theſe Words were written, were the People of *Epheſus*; who being, as we are told in the *Acts*, Worſhippers of the great Goddeſs *Diana*, in all Probability worſhipped the God *Bacchus* alſo; at the Celebration of whoſe Feſtivals, it was always cuſtomary, nay, Part of their Religion, to get drunk; as though there was no other Way to pleaſe their God, but by turning themſelves into Brutes.

The Apoſtle therefore, in this Chapter, amongſt many other precepts more eſpecially applicable to them, lays down that in the Text; and

and exhorts them, as they had now, by the free Grace of God, been turned from heatheniſh Darkneſs to the Light of the Goſpel, to walk as Children of Light, and no longer make it Part of their Religion or Practice to be drunk with Wine, wherein is Exceſs; but, on the contrary, ſtrive to be filled with the Spirit of that Saviour, after whoſe Name they were now called, and whoſe Religion taught them to abſtain from ſuch a filthy Sin, and to live ſoberly as they ought to live.

By the World being now Chriſtian, and the Doctrines of the Goſpel every where received, one would imagine, there ſhould be no Reaſon for repeating the Precepts now before us. But alas, Chriſtians! I mean Chriſtians falſly ſo called, are ſo led captive by all Sin in General, and by this of Drunkenneſs in particular, that was St. *Paul* to riſe again from the dead, he might be tempted to think moſt of us were turned back to the Worſhip of dumb Idols; that we had ſet up Temples in Honour of *Bacchus*, and made it Part of our Religion, as the *Epheſians* did of theirs, *to be drunk with Wine, wherein is Exceſs.*

Our civil Magiſtrates have not been wanting to uſe the Power given them from above for the Puniſhment and Reſtraint of ſuch evil Doings; and I wiſh it could be ſaid this Plague of Drinking, by what they have done, had been ſtayed amongſt us. But alas! though their Labour, we truſt, has not been altogether in vain in the Lord, yet thouſands, and I could almoſt ſay, ten thouſands fall daily at our Right Hand, by this Sin of Drunkenneſs, in our Streets; nay, Men ſeem to have made a Covenant with Hell, and though

the

the Power of the civil Magiſtrate is exerted againſt them; nay, and though they cannot but daily ſee the Companions of their Riot hourly by this, brought to the Grave, yet they *will riſe up early to follow ſtrong Drink, and cry, To Morrow ſhall be as to Day, and ſo much the more abundantly; when we awake, we will ſeek it yet again.*

It is high Time therefore, for thy Miniſters to lift up their Voices like a Trumpet, and ſince human Threats cannot prevail, to ſet before them the Terrors of the Lord, and try if theſe will not perſuade them to ceaſe from the Evil of their Doings.

But alas! how ſhall I addreſs myſelf to them? I fear Exceſs of Drinking has made them ſuch mere *Nabals*, that there is no ſpeaking to them. And many of God's Servants have toiled all their Lifetimes in diſſuading them from this Sin of Drunkenneſs, yet they will not forbear. However, at his Commmand, I will ſpeak alſo, though they be a rebellious Houſe. Magnify thy Srength, O Lord, in my Weakneſs, and grant that I may ſpeak with ſuch Demonſtration of the Spirit, and with Power, that from henceforward they may ceaſe to act ſo unwiſely, and this Sin of Drunkenneſs may not be their Ruin.

Believe me, ye unhappy Men of *Belial* (for ſuch, alas! this Sin has made you) it is not without the ſtrongeſt Reaſons, as well as utmoſt Concern for your precious and immortal Souls, that I now conjure you, in the Apoſtles Words, *Not to be drunk with Wine, or any other Liquor, wherein is Exceſs.*

For,

For, *Firſt*, Druukenneſs is a Sin which muſt be highly diſpleaſing to God; becauſe it is an Abuſe of his good Creatures.

When God firſt made Man, and had breathed into him the breath of Life, he gave him Dominion over the Works of his Hands, and every Herb bearing Seed, and every Tree, in which was the Fruit of a Tree yielding Seed, to him it was given for Meat; but when *Adam* had taſted the forbidden Fruit, which was the only Reſtraint laid upon him, he forfeited this Priviledge, and had no Right, ſince he had diſobeyed his Creator, to the Uſe of any one of the Creatures.

But, bleſſed be God, this Charter, as well as all other Priviledges, is reſtored to us by the Death of the ſecond *Adam*, our Lord and Maſter *Jeſus Chriſt*. Of every Beaſt of the Field, every Fiſh of the Sea, and whatſoever flieth in the Air, or moveth on the Face of the Earth, that is fit for Food, we may freely eat, *i. e.* without Scruple take, and eat; but then, with this Limitation, that we uſe them moderately. For God, by the Death of *Jeſus*, has given no Man Licence to be intemperate; but, on the contrary, has laid us under the ſtrongeſt Obligations to live ſoberly, as well as godly, in this preſent World.

But the Drunkard, deſpiſing the Goodneſs and Bounty of God, in reſtoring to us what we had ſo juſtly forfeited, turns his Grace into Wantonneſs; and as though the Creature were not of itſelf enough ſubject to Vanity, by being Curſed for our Sake, he abuſes it ſtill more, by making it adminiſter to his Luſts; and turns that Wine which was intended to make glad his Heart, into a deadly Poiſon.

But

But thinkeſt thou, O Drunkard, whoſoever thou art, thou ſhalt eſcape the righteous Judgment of God? No, the Time will ſhortly come that thou muſt be no longer Steward, and then the ſovereign Lord of all the Earth will reckon with thee for thus waſting his Goods. Alas! wilt thou then wreſt Scripture any longer to thy own Damnation? And becauſe *Jeſus Chriſt* turned Water into Wine at the Marriage Feaſt, to ſupply the Wants of his indigent Hoſt, ſay, that it is therefore meet to make merry, and be drunken. No, thou ſhalt be ſilent before him; and know, that tho' thou haſt encouraged thyſelf in Drunkenneſs by ſuch like Arguments, yet for all theſe Things God will bring thee into Judgment.

But, *Secondly*, What makes Drunkenneſs more exceeding ſinful, is, that a Man, by falling into it, ſinneth againſt his own Body?

When the Apoſtle would diſſuade the *Corinthians* from Fornication, he urges this as an Argument, *Flee Fornication*, ſays he, *Brethren*; *for he that committeth Fornication, ſinneth againſt his own Body.* And may not I as juſtly cry out, Flee Drunkenneſs, my Brethren, ſince he that committeth that Crime, ſinneth againſt his own Body? For, from whence come ſo many Diſeaſes and Diſtempers in your Bodies; Come they not from hence, even from your Intemperance in drinking? Who hath Pains in the Head? Who hath Rottenneſs in the Bones? Who hath Redneſs of Eyes? He that tarries long at the Wine, he that riſes early to ſeek new Wine. How many walking Skeletons have you ſeen, whoſe Bodies were once exceeding fair to look upon, fat, and well favoured; but, by this Sin of drinking,

how

how has their Beauty departed from them, and how have they been permitted to walk to and fro upon the Earth, as though God intended to ſet them up, as he did *Lot*'s Wife, for Monuments of his Juſtice, that others might learn not to get drunk? Nay I appeal to yourſelves. Are not many, for this Cauſe, even now ſickly among you? And have not many of your Companions whom you once ſaw flouriſhing, like green Bay Trees, been brought by it, with Sorrow, to their Graves?

We might perhaps, think ourſelves hardly dealt with by God, was he to ſend to us, as he did to the royal Pſalmiſt, to chooſe one Plague out of three, whereby we ſhould be deſtroyed. But had the Almighty decreed to cut off Man from the Face of the Earth, and to ſhorten his Days, he could not well ſend a more effectual Plague, than to permit Men, as they pleaſed, to overcharge themſelves with Drunkenneſs; for though it be a ſlow, yet it is a certain Poiſon. And if the Sword has ſlain its thouſands, Drunkenneſs has ſlain its ten thouſands.

And will not this alarm you, O ye Tranſgreſſors? Will not this perſuade you to ſpare yourſelves, and to do your Bodies no Harm? What, have you loſt the firſt Principles of human Nature, the fundamental Law of Self-preſervation? You ſeem to have a great Fondneſs for your Bodies, why otherwiſe to gratify their inordinate Appetites, do you drink to Exceſs? But ſurely, if you truly loved them, you would not thus deſtroy them; and was there no other Argument to be urged againſt Drunkenneſs, the Conſideration that it will deſtroy thoſe Lives you are ſo fond of, one would imagine, ſhould be ſufficient.

I know

I know, indeed, that it is a common Anſwer that Drunkards make to thoſe, who, out of Love, would pull them as Firebrands out of the Fire, "We are no Body's Enemy but "our own." But this, inſtead of being an Excuſe for, is but an Aggravation of their Guilt: For (not to mention that the Drunkenneſs of one Man has cloathed many a Family with Rags, and that it is ſcarce poſſible for a Perſon to be drunk, without tempting his Neighbour alſo) I ſay, not to mention theſe, and many other ill Conſequences, which would prove ſuch an Excuſe to be entirely falſe; yet what is dearer to a Man than himſelf? And if he himſelf be loſt, what would all the whole World avail him? But how wilt thou ſtand, O Man, before the Judgment-Seat of *Chriſt*, and make ſuch an Excuſe, when thou ſhalt be arraigned before him as a Self-Murderer? Will it then be ſufficient, thinkeſt thou, to ſay, *I was no Man's Enemy but my own?* No; God will then tell thee, that thou waſt not thy own; that thou waſt bought with the Price of his dear Son's Blood, and thou oughteſt therefore to have glorified him with thy Spirit, and with thy Body, which were his. And ſince thou haſt, by Intemperance, deſtroyed thy Body, he will deſtroy both thy Body and Soul in Hell.

But, *Thirdly*, What renders Drunkenneſs more inexcuſeable, is, that it robs a Man of his Reaſon.

Reaſon is the Glory of a Man; the chief Thing whereby God has made us to differ from the

the Brute Creation. And our modern Unbelievers have exalted it to ſuch a high Degree, as even to ſet it in Oppoſition to Revelation, and deny the Lord that bought them. But though in doing this, they greatly err, and whilſt they profeſs themſelves wiſe, become real Fools; yet we muſt acknowledge, that Reaſon is the Candle of the Lord, and whoſoever puts it out, ſhall bear his Puniſhment, whoſoever he be.

But yet, this the Drunkard does. *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Curſe he makes his Choice, his Reaſon departeth from him; and then what is he better than a Brute?

The very Heathen Kings were ſo ſenſible of this, that, in order to deter their young Princes from drinking, they uſed to make their Slaves get drunk, and be expoſed before them. And didſt thou but ſee thine own Picture, O Drunkard, when, after having drowned thy Reaſon, thou ſtaggereſt to and fro, like one of the Fools in *Iſrael*, and ſeeſt thy very Companions making Songs upon thee, ſurely thou wouldſt not return to thy Vomit again, but abhor thyſelf in Duſt and Aſhes?

When *David*, in a holy Extacy, was dancing before the Ark, *Michal*, *Saul*'s Daughter, deſpiſed him in her Heart; and when he came home, ſhe ſaid, *How glorious was the King of* Iſrael *to Day, who uncovered himſelf to Day in the Eyes of the Handmaids of his Servants, as one of the vain Fellows ſhameleſly uncovereth himſelf.* And may not every one that meets a Drunkard, more juſtly ſay, *How glorious does he, that was made a little lower than the Angels,*

gels, look to Day, when unmindful of his Dignity, he has, by drinking, robbed himſelf of his Reaſon, and reduced himſelf to a Level with the Beaſts that periſh.

But what if God, in the midſt of one of theſe drunken Fits, ſhould arreſt thee by Death, and ſay unto thee, *Thou Fool, this Moment ſhall thy Soul be required of thee.* Oh! How wouldſt thou appear in thoſe filthy Garments before that God, in whoſe Sight the Heavens are not clean. And how knoweſt thou, O Man, but this may be thy Lot? Haſt thou not known many, in thy Life-time, ſummoned at ſuch an unguarded Hour; and what Aſſurance haſt thou given thee, that thou ſhalt not be the next? Becauſe God has forborn thee ſo long, thinkeſt thou he will forbear always? No, this is rather a Sign that he will come at an Hour thou lookeſt not for him; and ſince his Goodneſs and Long-Suffering has not led thee to Repentance, he will cut thee down, and not permit thee to cumber the Ground any longer. Conſider this then, all ye that count it a Pleaſure to turn yourſelves into Brutes, leſt God pluck you away by a ſudden Death, and there be none to deliver you.

But, *Fourthly*, There is a farther Aggravation of this Crime, that it is an Inlet to, and Forerunner of many other Sins; for it ſeldom comes alone.

We may ſay of Drunkenneſs, as *Solomon* does of Strife, that it is like the letting out of Water; for we know not what will be the End

End thereof. Its Name is *Legion:* For behold a Troop of Sins cometh after it. And for my own Part, when I ſee a Drunkard, I can ſcarce, with the holy Prophet, when he looked in *Hazael*'s Face, forbear weeping, to conſider how many Vices he may fall into, ere he comes to himſelf again.

What horrid Inceſt did righteous *Lot* commit with his own Daughters when they had made him drunk? And, I doubt not, but there are many amongſt you, who have committed ſuch Crimes when you have deprived yourſelves of your Reaſon by drinking; that were you to hear of them, your Heart, like *Nabal*'s, after he was told how he had abuſed *David* when he was drunk, would die within you. And had any one told you, when you were ſober, that you would have been guilty of ſuch Crimes, you would have cried out, with *Hazael* before mentioned, *Are thy Servants ſo many Dogs, that they ſhould do thus?*

But no marvel that Drunkards commit ſuch Crimes: For Drunkenneſs drives the Holy Spirit from them; they become mere Machines for the Devil to work up to what he pleaſes; he enters into them, as he entred into the Herd of Swine; and no Wonder if they then commit all Uncleanneſs, and any other Crime, with Greedineſs. But this leads me to a

Fifth Conſideration, which highly aggravates the Sin of Drunkenneſs, *viz.* That it ſeparates the holy Spirit from us.

It

It is to be hoped, that no one here preſent need be informed, that before we can be Chriſtians indeed, we muſt receive the Holy Ghoſt, muſt be born again from above, and have the Spirit of God witneſſing with our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God. This, this alone is true Chriſtianity; and without the Cohabitation of this Bleſſed Spirit in our Hearts, our Righteouſneſs does not exceed the Righteouſneſs of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and we ſhall in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of God.

But now, Drunkards do, in Effect, bid this Bleſſed Spirit depart from them: For what has he to do with ſuch filthy Swine? No, they have no Lot or Share in the Spirit of the Son of *David*. They have chaſed him out of their Hearts, by defiling his Temple; I mean their Bodies. And he can no more hold Communion with them, than Light can have Communion with Darkneſs, or *Chriſt* have Concord with *Belial*.

The Apoſtle therefore, in the Words of the Text, exhorts the *Epheſians*, *not to be drunk with Wine, wherein is Exceſs, but to be filled with the Spirit*; thereby implying, that Drunkenneſs and the Spirit of God could never dwell in the ſame Heart. And in another Epiſtle, he bids them *avoid unprofitable Converſation, as a Thing which grieved the Holy Spirit; whereby alone they could be ſealed to the Day of Redemption.* And if unprofitable Converſation grieves the Holy Spirit, at what an infinite Diſtance muſt Drunkenneſs drive him from the Hearts of Men?

But oh that you were wiſe! That you would conſider what a dreadful Thing it is to have the Spirit of the Living God depart from you: For, aſſure yourſelves, if you live without him, you live without God in the World. You are in the ſame miſerable forlorn Condition as *Saul* was, when an evil Spirit of the Lord came upon him; and you are only ſo many Veſſels of Wrath fitted for Deſtruction. But this brings me to the

Sixth and laſt Reaſon I ſhall urge againſt the Sin of Drunkenneſs, that it abſolutely unfits a Man for the Enjoyment of God in Heaven, and expoſes him to his Eternal Wrath.

To ſee and enjoy God, and to be like the bleſſed Angels, always beholding the Face of our Heavenly Father, in the Glories of his Kingdom, is ſuch an unſpeakable Happineſs, that even wicked Men, though they will not live the Life of the Righteous, cannot but wiſh their future State to be like his.

But think you, O ye Drunkards, that you ſhall ever be Partakers of this Inheritance with the Saints in Light? Do you flatter yourſelves, that you, who have made them often the Subject of your drunken Songs, ſhall now be exalted to ſing with them the Heavenly Songs of *Sion?* No, as by Drunkenneſs you have made your Hearts Cages of unclean Birds, with impure and unclean Spirits muſt you dwell.

A burning *Tophet*, kindled by God's Wrath, is prepared for your Reception, where you muſt ſuffer the Vengeance of an eternal Fire, and in vain cry out for a Drop of Water to cool your Tongues. Indeed you ſhall drink, but it ſhall be

be a Cup of God's Fury: For in the Hand of the Lord there will be a Cup of Fury, it will be full mixed; and as for the Dregs thereof, all the Drunkards of the Land ſhall ſuck them out.

But perhaps you may not believe this Report. Theſe Words may be looked upon by you as idle Tales, and I may ſeem to you as *Lot* did to his Sons-in-law, when he came to warn them to get up out of *Sodom*, as one that mocketh. But if you believe not me, believe eternal Truth itſelf, and he has poſitively declared, that no Drunkard ſhall ever enter into his Kingdom.

And I call Heaven and Earth to Witneſs againſt you this Day, that as ſurely as the Lord rained Fire and Brimſtone, as ſoon as *Lot* went out of *Sodom*, ſo ſurely will God caſt you into a Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, when he ſhall come to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and have not obeyed the Goſpel of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*.

Behold then I have told you before; remember you this Day were informed what the End of Drunkenneſs would be. And I ſummon you, in the Name of that God whom I ſerve, to meet me at the Judgment-Seat of *Chriſt*, that you may acquit both my Maſter and me; and confeſs, with your own Mouths, that your Damnation was of yourſelves, and that we were freed from the Blood of you all.

But, Lord, has no one believed our Report? Wilt thou ſuffer ſo many Words to be ſpoken in vain, if it be yet in vain? No, methinks I ſee ſome pricked to the Heart, and ready to cry out in the Language of *David* to *Abigail*, *Bleſ-*

ſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, *which ſent thee this Day to ſpeak unto us. For ſurely, unleſs he had ſent thee, this Sin of Drunkenneſs had been our Ruin.* But now, ſince we find whither it will lead us, we are reſolved to drink no Liquor to Exceſs while the World ſtands, leſt we ſhould be tormented in the Flames of Hell.

But alas! how ſhall we be delivered from the Power of this Sin? Can the *Ethiopian* change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots? So hard, almoſt, will it be for us who have been accuſtomed to be intemperate, to learn to live ſober.

But do not deſpair; for what is impoſſible with Man, is poſſible with God. Of whom then ſhould you ſeek for Succour, but of him your Lord? Who, though for this Sin of Drunkenneſs, he might juſtly turn away his Face from you; yet if you pour out your Hearts before him in daily Prayer, and ask Aſſiſtance from above, he will endue you with Power from on high, and make you more than Conquerors through *Jeſus Chriſt* that loved you. Had you kept up Communion with him in Prayer, you would not ſo long, by Drunkenneſs, have had Communion with Devils. And had you beſought him inſtantly, that you might not be led into Temptation, you would always have been delivered from the Evil of it. But, like the Prodigal, you have deſired to be your own Maſters; you have lived without Prayer, depended on your own Strength; and ſee, alas! on what a broken Reed you have leaned. How ſoon have you made yourſelves like the Beaſts that have no Underſtanding? *But turn ye, turn*

ye

ye from your evil Ways. Come to him, with the repenting Prodigal, ſaying, *Father we have ſinned, we beſeech thee, let not this Sin of Drunkenneſs have any longer Dominion over us.* And lo! it ſhall happen to you even as you will.

But think not that God muſt do all, and you nothing. No; as we *can* do nothing without him, ſo he *will* do nothing without us. And if we pray that we may not be led into Temptation, we muſt take heed not to throw ourſelves into it.

A ſecond Means therefore I would recommend to you, in order to get the better of Drunkenneſs, is to avoid evil Company. For it is the evil Communications of wicked Men, that has drawn ſo many thouſands into this Sin, and ſo corrupted their good Manners.

But you may ſay, *If I leave my Companions, I muſt expect Contempt: For they will certainly deſpiſe me for being ſingular.* And thinkeſt thou, O Man, ever to enter in at the ſtrait Gate by a true Converſion, without being had in Deriſion of them that are round about thee? No; though thou mayſt be deſpiſed, and not go to Heaven, yet thou canſt not go to Heaven, without being deſpiſed: For the Friendſhip of the World is Enmity with God. And they that are born after the Fleſh, will perſecute thoſe that are born after the Spirit. Let not, therefore, a ſervile Fear of being deſpiſed by a Man that ſhall die, hinder thy turning unto the living God. For what is a little Contempt? It is but a Vapour which vaniſheth away, and cometh not again. Better be derided by a few Companions here, than be made aſhamed before Men and Angels hereafter. Better be the Song

of a few Drunkards on Earth, than dwell with them where they will be eternally reproaching and curſing each other in Hell. Yet a little while, and they themſelves ſhall praiſe thy Doings, and ſhall ſay, *We, Fools, counted his leaving us to be Folly, and his End to be without Honour: But how is he numbered among the Sons of God, and his Lot among the Saints!*

But I haſten to lay down a *Third* Means for thoſe who would overcome this Sin of Drunkenneſs,—to enter upon a Life of ſtrict Self-denial and Mortification: For this Kind of Sin goeth not forth but by Prayer and Faſting. It is true, this may ſeem a difficult Task; but then, we muſt thank ourſelves for it; For had we begun ſooner, our Work would have been the eaſier. And even now, if you will but ſtrive, the Yoke of Mortification will grow lighter and lighter every Day.

And here, by way of Concluſion to this Diſcourſe, I cannot but exhort all Perſons, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to practiſe a ſtrict Self-denial in eating and drinking. For though the Kingdom of God conſiſts not in Meats and Drinks, yet an abſtemious Uſe of, and a frequent total Abſtinence from God's good Creatures, are great Promoters of the ſpiritual Life. And perhaps there are more deſtroyed by living in a regular Senſuality, than even by that very Sin I have now been warning you of.—— I know, indeed, that many, who are only almoſt Chriſtians, and who ſeek, but do not ſtrive to enter into the Kingdom of God, urge a Text of Scripture to juſtify their Indulgence, ſaying, *That it is not what entreth into the*

Man

Man defileth the Man. And ſo we grant, when taken moderately; but then they ſhould conſider, that it is poſſible, nay, it is proved by daily Experience, that a Perſon may eat and drink ſo much as not to hurt his Body, and yet do infinite Prejudice to his Soul. For Self-indulgence lulls the Soul into a ſpiritual Slumber, as well as direct Intemperance; and though the latter may expoſe us to more Contempt among Men, yet the former, if continued in, will as certainly ſhut us out from the Preſence of God. St. *Paul* knew this full well; and therefore, tho' he was the ſpiritual Father of thouſands, and was near upon finiſhing his Courſe, yet he ſays, it was his daily Practice to keep his Body under, and bring it into Subjection, no doubt, by a ſtrict Abſtinence and Faſting; not that he might arrive at higher Degrees of Perfection, but leaſt after he had preached to others, he himſelf ſhould be a Caſt-away. But why urge I the Apoſtle's Example to excite you to a ſtrict Temperance in eating and drinking? Rather let me exhort you only to put in Practice the latter Part of the Text, *to labour to be filled with the Spirit of God*, and then you will no longer ſearch the Scriptures to find Arguments for Self-indulgence; but you will deal ſincerely with yourſelves, and faſt as often as the Church enjoyns, if your Healths will permit; and eat and drink no more at any Time, than what is conſiſtent with the ſtricteſt Precepts of the Goſpel. Oh do but beg of God, that you may ſee how you are fallen in *Adam*, and muſt be renewed ere you can be happy, by the Spirit of *Jeſus Chriſt!* Let us beſeech him to enlighten us, to ſee the Treache-

ry of our corrupt Hearts, and how pure and holy theſe Bodies ought to be, which are living Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, and then we ſhall ſhew ourſelves Men. Abſtain from all Appearance of any thing that will quench this holy Spirit, and do any Thing that will invite him into, or cauſe him to abide in our Hearts. And thus being made Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, by his dwelling in our Bodies here, though, after Death, Worms may deſtroy them; yet ſhall they be raiſed by the ſame Spirit at the general Reſurrection of the laſt Day, to be faſhioned like unto *Chriſt*'s glorious Body hereafter.

Which God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.

PRAYERS

PRAYERS.

A Prayer for one entruſted with the Education of Children.

O Deareſt *Jeſu*, who gathereſt thy Lambs into thy Boſom, and didſt ſolemnly command thy Servant *Peter*, to feed thy Lambs; grant I may ſhew that I love thee more than all Things, by doing as thou haſt commanded him.

Lord, who am I, or what is in me, that thou ſhould thus put Honour upon me, in making me any way inſtrumental to the preparing Souls for thee? O Saviour, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son, much leſs to be employed in the Service of thy Children.

But ſince thou haſt been pleaſed in me to ſhew forth all thy Mercy, and haſt called me by thy good Providence to this bleſſed Work, grant that I may always remember, that the little Flock committed to my Charge, are

bought with the Price of thy own moſt precious Blood. And let it therefore be my Meat and Drink, to feed them with the ſincere Milk of thy Word, that they may grow thereby.

To this End, I beſeech thee of thy free Grace, firſt to convert my own Soul, and cauſe me to become like a little Child myſelf, that from an experimental Knowledge of my own Corruptions, I may have my ſpiritual Senſes exerciſed, to diſcern the firſt Emotions of Evil that may at any Time ariſe in their Hearts.

Oh give me, I beſeech thee, a diſcerning Spirit, that I may ſearch, and try, and examine the different Tempers of their Sin-ſick Souls; and, like a skilful Phyſician, apply healing or corroſive Medicines, as their reſpective Maladies ſhall require.

Gracious *Jeſu*, let puniſhing be always my ſtrange Work; and, if it be poſſible, grant that they may be all drawn to their Duty, as I would be drawn myſelf, by the Cords of Love. And when I am obliged to correct them, grant it may not be to ſhew my Authority, or gratify a corrupt Paſſion, but purely out of the ſame Motive from which thou doſt correct us, to make them Partakers of thy Holineſs.

Oh! keep me, I beſeech thee, from being angry without a Cauſe: Permit me not raſhly to be provoked by the Infirmities and Perverſeneſs of their Infant Years; but grant I may ſhew all long Suffering towards them: And by exerciſing ſuch frequent Acts of Patience and For-

Forbearance, grant, I myſelf may learn the Meekneſs and Gentleneſs of *Chriſt*.

O thou, who taughteſt thy Diſciples how to pray, pour down, I beſeech thee, the Spirit of Grace and Supplication into their Hearts, that at all Times, and in all Places they may both deſire and know how to call upon thee by diligent Prayer.

Father, into thy Hands I commend my own and their Spirits: Look down from Heaven, the Habitation of thy Holineſs, and bleſs them from thy holy Hill.

Keep them, oh keep them unſpotted from the World: grant they may fly youthful Luſts, and remember thee, their Creator, in the Days of their Youth. Train them, I beſeech thee, in the Way wherein they ſhould go; and when they are old, let them not depart from it.

O thou, who didſt ſanctify *Jeremiah* from the Womb, and calledſt young *Samuel* betimes, to wear a linen Ephod before thee, Sanctify their whole Spirits, Souls and Bodies, and preſerve them blameleſs, till the ſecond Coming of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*.

O thou, who didſt endue *Solomon* with Grace, to chuſe Wiſdom before Riches and Honour; incline their Hearts to make the ſame Choice of thee, their only Good; and may they always renounce and triumph over the Luſt of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life.

Finally, do thou, O bleſſed *Jeſu*, who at twelve Years old waſt found in the Temple, ſitting among the Doctors, both hearing and asking them Queſtions, grant, that theſe Children may

love to tread the Courts of thy Houſe, and have their Ears opened betimes, to receive the Diſcipline of Wiſdom, that ſo, if it by thy good Pleaſure, to prolong the Time of their Pilgrimage here on Earth, they may ſhine as Lights in the World; or, if thou ſeeſt it beſt, to bring down their Strength in their Journey, and to ſhorten their Days, they may be early fitted by Purity of Heart, to ſing Eternal *Hallelujah*'s to thee, the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, in the Kingdom of Heaven for ever.

Grant this, O Father, for thy Dear Son's Sake, CHRIST JESUS, our Lord. Amen, Amen.

A PRAYER for a Servant.

O Thou high and lofty One, who inhabiteſt Eternity, yet art pleaſed to dwell with the humble Heart: O Bleſſed *Jeſu*, who haſt made of one Blood all Nations under Heaven, with whom there is no Reſpect of Perſons, and who in the Days of thy Fleſh didſt go down to heal a *Centurion*'s ſick Servant; have Mercy, I beſeech the, on me, even me, alſo a poor Servant. Stretch forth the Right Hand of thy Power, to heal all the Diſeaſes of my Sin-ſick Soul, and enable me by thy Holy Spirit, faithfully to diſcharge the ſeveral Duties of that Vocation, whereto I am called by thee my God. Give me Grace, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, to obey my Maſter, according to the Fleſh, in all Things; not with Eye-ſervice, as a Man-pleaſer, but with ſingleneſs of Heart, as unto *Chriſt*; knowing, that whatſoever any Man doeth, the ſame he ſhall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Make my Obedience to my Maſter on Earth, like to that which the holy Angels pay thee in Heaven. When I am commanded to go, may I go; when I am required to come, may I come; whatſoever I am bid to do agreeable to thy Will, may I do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto

unto Men. But if at any Time, O Lord, thou ſhouldſt, to try what is in my Heart, permit me to be tempted to do any Wickedneſs, O do thou give me Grace, as thou didſt *Joſeph*, patiently to ſubmit to a Priſon and to Death itſelf, rather than ſin againſt thee, my God. Knowing that it is Thankworthy, if a Man for Conſcience towards God, endure Grief, ſuffering wrongfully. Enable me, O Lord, to ſhew good Fidelity in all things committed to my Charge. Do thou, who bleſſedſt *Abraham*'s Servant, when he went to take a Wife for his Maſter's Son, *Iſaac*; ſo bleſs me in all my Maſter's Buſineſs, that he may ſee, as *Potiphar* did, that the Lord maketh all that I do to proſper in my Hands.

Keep, O Lord, alſo the Door of my Lips, that I offend at no Time with my Tongue; let a falſe Tongue be far from me, and let me never lie unto my Maſter, as *Gehazi* did. O let no ſuch Unfaithfulneſs cleave unto me; leaſt by being a Partaker with him in his Crime, I partake alſo in his Puniſhment. Bridle alſo my Tongue from ever anſwering again: May all Sullenneſs and Peeviſhneſs of Temper be put away from me, with all Paſſion: May I learn of thee, O holy *Jeſu*, to be meek and lowly in Heart; O make me patient of Reproof, willing to be taught, and ſubject with all Fear and Godly Reverence, not only to the Good and Gentle, but alſo to the Froward. Or if ever, thro' the Weakneſs of the Fleſh, I ſhould offend in this Point, as *Hagar* did againſt *Sarah*, enable me, I beſeech thee, immediately to repent and to return again to my Obedience. Grant alſo, O Lord, I may behave holily and unblameably to my

Fellow

Fellow Servants: Let no corrupt Communication, nor fooliſh Talking, or Jeſting, which is not convenient, at any Time come out of my Mouth, but rather giving of Thanks; May our Converſation be always ſeaſoned with the Salt of thy Holy Word, and ſuch as may tend to the edifying one another.

Endue us all with that Charity, which hideth a Multitude of Sins; and if ever, O Lord, thy Glory ſhould call me to bring up an ill Report to my Maſter againſt any of my Fellow Servants, which, I beſeech thee, of thine Mercies, I may never have Occaſion to do; grant it may be done with Gentleneſs and Compaſſion, not to inſinuate myſelf into my Maſter's Favour, but to prevent them ſinning againſt thee, and thereby ruining their own Souls. Keep us, we beſeech thee, from ſtriving among ourſelves, as *Abraham*'s and *Lot*'s Herdſmen did, about any of the Concerns of this Life; but grant we may be always provoking each other to Love and to good Works. Preſerve us, we beſeech thee, from envying one another, either the Favour of our Maſter, or any Bleſſing whatſoever. Let us not ſeek our own, but each our Brother's Welfare, as Members of the ſame Body, as Diſciples of the ſame Lord; when one of us ſuffers, let all of us ſuffer; when one of us rejoyces, let all of us rejoyce with him: Make us Pitiful and Tender-hearted to each other, and if at any Time we ſhould have a Quarrel, enable us, O Lord, immediately to forgive one another, even as thou God for *Chriſt*'s Sake, haſt forgiven us.

Finally, O Lord, endue us with a deep Humility, that we may in Brotherly Love prefer one

one another, and in Lowlineſs of Mind each of us eſteem his Brother better than himſelf. O hear all our Prayers for our Maſter, and grant that he and his Houſhold may faithfully ſerve thee our Lord. O make him as devout as *Cornelius*, and us, like the Soldiers that waited upon him, devout alſo. That thus adorning thy Holy Goſpel in all Things, we may at thy ſecond Coming to judge the World, be rewarded according as we have improved the different Talents which we have received from thee, O glorious Redeemer, who liveſt and reigneſt with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, ever one God, World without End. *Amen. Amen.*

A PRAYER for one under Spiritual Deſertion.

O Ever bleſſed and moſt compaſſionate Redeemer, who waſt in all Things tempted like as we are, Sin only excepted—O thou Lover of Souls, who in the Days of thy Fleſh didſt offer up ſtrong Cries and Tears, and waſt heard in that thou fearedſt———O thou Reſtorer of Mankind; who waſt in ſuch an Agony in the Garden, that thou ſweateſt great Drops of Blood, falling to the Ground——O thou Almighty High Prieſt, who, when thro' the eternal Spirit thou was about to make thy Soul an Offering for Sin, hadſt thy own Divinity withdrawn from thee, and didſt cry out in the Bitterneſs of thy Soul, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me*——— O thou, who now ſitteſt at the Right Hand of the Father, continually to make Interceſſion for us—Look down, I beſeech thee, upon me, thy unworthy Servant —— For thou haſt turned away thy Face, and lo! I am troubled —— Thou haſt taken off my Chariot-Wheels, and I drive heavily——Thou haſt permitted a Cloud to overſhadow

ſhadow me, and an horrible Darkneſs, Fearfulneſs, and Dread, to overwhelm me, ſo that my Soul would be exceeding Sorrowful, even unto Death, did I not believe thou wouldſt yet turn again, and viſit me.

Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me; but if my Soul cannot be made perfect, unleſs I drink it, thy Holy, thy Bleſſed Will be done.

Lo here I am! Deal with me as it ſeemeth good in thy Sight—Only let thy Grace be ſufficient for me; and in the midſt of my Agonies ſend down, I beſeech thee, an Angel from Heaven to ſtrengthen me.

Lord, thou knoweſt that Satan has deſired to have me, that he may ſift me as Wheat; O grant that my Faith fail not.

Suffer, O ſuffer him not to get an Advantage over me, for thou art not ignorant of his Devices———O let him not ſo prevail againſt me, as to make me entertain hard Thoughts of thee my moſt loving Maſter, and compaſſionate Redeemer —— For I know thou of very Faithfulneſs haſt cauſed me thus to be troubled ——— And doſt afflict me for no other Reaſon, but to make me Partaker of thy Holineſs.

Give me, O give me, the Shield of Faith, and enable me to repel all the fiery blaſphemous Thoughts, that the wicked one ſhall at any Time dart into my Mind——Let me drive them off as carefully as *Abraham* did the Birds that came to devour his Sacrifice— And oh! Let him never tempt me to think, thou wilt impute them to me for Sin.

Lord,

Lord, thou only knoweſt the preſent Dryneſs and Barrenneſs of my Soul, and how liable I am to be tempted to fret againſt thee, O Lord, and to ſeek Pleaſure in the Creature, when I can find no ſenſible Satisfaction in thee, my great Redeemer, who art God, bleſſed for ever.

But, I beſeech thee, keep my Soul quiet and compoſed, and for thy Mercy's Sake enable me only to take Pleaſure in thee, and to ſit down ſolitary in the Bitterneſs of my Soul, and patiently wait till I can draw Comfort from thee, the Fountain of living Waters, rather than hew out to myſelf broken Ciſterns, that will hold no Water.

Never, never let me fall out with any of thy Ordinances, or think, I do not pleaſe thee in my holy Duties, becauſe I have no inward ſenſible Pleaſure in them myſelf.

Enable me to walk by Faith and not by Sight, and to ſeek thee in the Uſe of all appointed Means, though it be ſorrowing; being aſſured that after three Days I ſhall find thee in the Temple; or that thou wilt make thyſelf known unto me, by breaking of Bread, or in ſome other Way.

Lord, I believe, help thou my Unbelief, that I am now talking with thee as certainly, as *Mary* was, when thou didſt converſe with her at the Sepulchre; though ſhe know it not.—In thy due Time reveal thyſelf again to me, as thou didſt to her; and let me hear the Voice of my Beloved.

Thou haſt promiſed, thou wilt not ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, but wilt with the Temptation make a Way

Way for us to eſcape, that we may be able to bear it—Fulfil, O Lord, this thy Promiſe—And after I have ſuffered a while, ſtrengthen, ſtabliſh, ſettle, and viſit me, as thou didſt thy Servant *Abraham*, when he returned from the Slaughter of the five Kings.

Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon me; reſtore to me the Joy of thy Salvation; and when my Heart is duly prepared, and humbled by theſe inward Trials, grant me a feeling Poſſeſſion of thee, my God, for the Sake of thy dear Son, *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Lord, *Amen. Amen.*

A PRAYER for one under the Diſpleaſure of Relations, for being Religious.

BLESSED Lord, who haſt commanded us to call upon thee in Time of Trouble, and thou wilt deliver us; and haſt always ſhewn thyſelf to be a God, hearing Prayer, mighty and willing to ſave; hear me now, I pray thee, when I call upon thee; for Trouble is at Hand.

Thou ſeeſt, O Lord, how many of my Brethren, according to the Fleſh, perſecute me for thy Name's Sake; ſo that I muſt renounce them, or decline openly profeſſing thee before Men.

But God forbid I ſhould love Father or Mother, Brethren or Siſters, more than thee, and thereby prove myſelf not worthy of thee. No! I have long ſince given thee my Soul and my Body; ſo lo! I now freely give thee my Friends alſo.

For I now find by Experience, that as it was formerly, ſo it is now---They that are born after the Fleſh, do perſecute thoſe that are born after the Spirit-----That thou cameſt not to ſend Peace on Earth, but a Sword--And that, unleſs a Man forſake all that he hath, he cannot be thy Diſciple.

Lo! I come to perform this Part of thy Will, O my God; being aſſured, that whoſoever forſaketh

ſaketh Father or Mother, Brethren or Siſters, Houſes or Lands, for thy Sake, or the Goſpel, ſhall receive a hundred-fold in this preſent Life, with Perſecution, and in the World to come Life everlaſting.

I truſt, O Lord, it is for the Sake alone, that I now make an Offering of the Favour of my Friends to thee; for thou knoweſt, O Lord, how continually they cry out, *Spare thyſelf*; tho' I am doing no more than thy holy Word ſtrictly requires me to do.

But do thou, O Bleſſed Saviour, who ſaidſt unto *Peter*, *Get thee behind me Satan*, enable me to ſtop my Ears to their falſe Inſinuations, charm they never ſo ſweetly; for *they ſavour not the Things that be of God, but the Things that be of Men.* And unleſs, O Lord, thou doſt help, they will be an Offence unto me, and cauſe me to deny the Lord that bought me.

Far be it from me, O Lord, to be ſurprized, becauſe of thoſe Offences; for thou haſt long ſince denounced Woe againſt the World becauſe of Offences; and, I find, it is needful for my Soul, that ſuch Offences ſhould come, to try what is in my Heart---- And try whether I love thee in Deed and in Truth.

Bleſſed therefore, for ever bleſſed be thy holy Name, that I am accounted worthy to ſuffer for thy Name's Sake. O let me rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, that my Reward ſhall be great in Heaven.

O let me never regard any of their Threatnings; for when my Father and Mother forſaketh

eth me, thou, O Lord, I am aſſured, wilt take me up.

Take me, O take me into thy Arms of thy Mercy; for henceforward know I no Man after the Fleſh. And whoſoever doth the Will of my Father, the ſame ſhall be my Brother, and Siſter, and Mother.

I know, O Lord, I know, that this will expoſe me to the Deriſion and Perſecution of thoſe that are round about me.

But do thou, who didſt ſeek for the poor Beggar, after he was caſt out by the *Jewiſh* Council, and didſt reveal thyſelf unto him, reveal thyſelf to me alſo, when my Name is caſt out as Evil by my Friends and the World—— Though they curſe, yet bleſs thou me, O Lord; and enable me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, to pray for them, even when they moſt deſpitefully uſe me, and perſecute me; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

It is owing, O Lord, to thy free Mercy alone, that I have in any Meaſure been enlightned to know thee and the Power of thy Reſurrection. O let the ſame Grace be ſufficient for them alſo, and make thy Almighty Power to be known in their Converſion.

Thou didſt once, O bleſſed Saviour, magnify thy Goodneſs in turning thy Servant *Paul*, from being a bitter Perſecutor, to be a zealous Preacher of thy Goſpel; and madeſt the trembling Jaylor cry out, even to thoſe whoſe Feet he had hurt in the Stocks, *Sirs, what ſhall I do to be ſaved?*

Look down therefore, I beſeech thee, in Pity and Compaſſion, on thoſe of my own Houſhold; and after I am converted myſelf, make me, or ſome other, inſtrumental, to ſtrengthen theſe my weak Brethren; that tho' we are now divided amongſt ourſelves, two againſt three, and three againſt two, yet we may at laſt, all with one Heart and one Mouth, glorify thee, O Lord; that thou mayſt come and abide with us, and love us as thou didſt *Lazarus*, *Mary*, and her Siſter *Martha*. Grant this, O Saviour, for thy infinite Merits Sake. *Amen* and *Amen*.

A PRAYER for one deſiring to be awakened to an Experience of the New Birth.

BLESSED *Jeſus*, thou haſt told us in thy Goſpel, that unleſs a Man be born again of the Spirit, and his Righteouſneſs exceed the outward Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and *Phariſees*, he cannot in any wiſe enter into the Kingdom of God. Grant me therefore, I beſeech thee, this true Circumciſion of the Heart, and ſend down thy bleſſed Spirit to work in me that inward Holineſs which alone can make me meet to partake of the Heavenly Inheritance with the Saints in Light.

Create in me, I beſeech thee, a new Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me. For of whom ſhall I ſeek for Succour but of thee, O Lord, with whom alone this is poſſible? Lord if thou wilt thou canſt make me whole—O ſay unto my Soul as thou didſt once unto the poor Leper, I will, be thou renewed—Have Compaſſion on me, O Lord, as thou once hadſt unto blind *Bartimeus*, who ſat by the way-ſide begging.

Lord, thou knoweſt all Things, thou knoweſt, what I would have thee to do—Grant, Lord, that I may receive my Sight—For I am conceived and born in Sin, my whole Head is Sick, my whole Heart is faint, from the Crown of my Head to the Sole of my Feet I am full of Wounds and Bruiſes and putrifying Sores. And yet I ſee it not. O awaken me, though it be with Thunder, to a ſenſible Feeling of the Corruptions of my fallen Nature! and for thy Mercies Sake ſuffer me no longer to ſit in Darkneſs and the Shadow of Death.

O prick me, prick me to the Heart! Dart down a Ray of that all-quickening Light which ſtruck thy Servant *Saul* to the Ground; and make me cry out with the trembling Jaylor, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?*

Lord, behold I pray; and bluſh, and am confounded that I never prayed on this wiſe before. I looked upon myſelf as rich, not conſidering that I was poor and blind, and naked. I was ignorant of my own Righteouſneſs, and I perſuaded myſelf I was whole, and therefore blindly thought I had no Need of thee, O great Phyſician of Souls, to heal my Sickneſs.

But being now convinced by thy free Mercy that my own Righteouſneſs is as filthy Rags, and that he is only a true Chriſtian who is one inwardly; behold, with ſtrong Cryings and Tears, and Groanings, that cannot be uttered, I beſeech thee, viſit me with thy free Spirit, and ſay unto theſe dry Bones, *Live.*

I confeſs, O Lord, that thy Grace is thy own, and that thy Spirit bloweth where he liſteth. And waſt thou to deal with me after my Deſerts, and

and reward me according to my Wickedneſs, I had long ſince been given over to a reprobate Mind, and had my Conſcience ſeared as with a red-hot Iron.

But, O Lord, ſince by ſparing me ſo long thou haſt ſhewn that thou wouldſt not the Death of a Sinner.---And ſince thou haſt promiſed that thou wilt give thy holy Spirit to thoſe that ask it, I hope thy Goodneſs and Long-ſuffering is intended to lead me to Repentance, and that thou wilt not turn away thy Face from me.

Thou ſeeſt, O Lord, thou ſeeſt, that with the utmoſt Earneſtneſs and Humility of Soul, I ask thy holy Spirit of thee; and am reſolved in Confidence of thy promiſe, who canſ[illegible] ſeek and kno[illegible] till I find a Door [illegible] d unto me[illegible]

[illegible] e me, or I periſh[illegible]
w[illegible] ation.——I [illegible]
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ſelf even as I am known.

Behold her[illegible] n. Let me do and ſu[illegible] ſeemeth Good in thy Sight, only renew [illegible] thy Spirit in my Mind, and make me a Partak[illegible] of thy Divine Nature.—So ſhall I praiſe thee a[illegible] the Days of my Life, and give thee Thanks for ever in the Glories of thy Kingdom, O moſt adorable Redeemer; to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed all Honour and Praiſe both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

A PRAYER for one newly awakened to a Senſe of the Divine Life.

O Almighty and everlaſting Father, who in the beginning ſpake and it was done, ſaying, *Let there be Light, and there was Light*—O moſt adorable Redeemer, who when *Adam* had eaten the forbidden Fruit waſt revealed as the Seed of the Woman, and didſt in the Fulneſs of Time, die an accurſed Death to ſave us from the Guilt and Power of our Sins, and thereby break the Serpent's Head.—O bleſſed and eternal Spirit, who didſt once move upon the Face of the great Deep, who didſt overſhadow the bleſſed Virgin, who didſt deſcend on the Son of God at his Baptiſm, and didſt come down after his Aſcenſion in fiery Tongues upon the Heads of each of his Apoſtles.—O holy bleſſed and glorious Trinity, three Perſons and one God, by whoſe Conſultation we were firſt made, and into whoſe Name we have been again baptized—Accept my humble and hearty Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving for calling me out of Darkneſs into thy marvellous Light; for quickening me when dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, and moving upon the Face of my polluted and diſordered Soul.

Thou haſt promiſed, O Lord, that thou wilt not quench the ſmoaking Flax, or break the bruiſed Reed. And thou haſt told us, that thy holy Spirit ſhould be in us as a well of Water ſpringing up unto eternal Life. Finiſh therefore, I beſeech thee, the good Work begun in my Soul, and now thou haſt called me, never let me lye down again.

Thou

Thou ſeeſt, O Lord, the good Seed ſown in my Heart is yet but as a very ſmall Grain of Muſtard-ſeed.—O continue to water with the Dew of thy heavenly Bleſſing what thy own Right-hand hath planted, and it ſhall become a great Tree.

Thou haſt touched the Eye of my Mind by thy Divine Power, and I ſee Men as Trees walking. Let thy holy Spirit by his bleſſed Influences more and more remove the remaining Scales till I at length ſee all Things clearly.

With Shame and Confuſion of Face, O Lord, I confeſs, I am unworthy of this and all other thy Mercies. For I have long ſince done Deſpite to the Spirit of Grace, crucified the Son of God afreſh, and put him to open Shame. But do thou, who art rich in Mercy to all that call upon thee, in Faithfulneſs, forgive me what is paſt, and grant I may from henceforward work out my Salvation with Fear and Trembling, ſince thou haſt ſo graciouſly wrought in me both to will and to do after thy good Pleaſure.

I know, O Lord, that now thou haſt begun to deliver me out of my natural, and worſe than *Egyptian* Bondage, I muſt expect to paſs through a barren and dry Wilderneſs, that there are Lions in the Way, that the Sons of *Anack* are to be grappled with before I attain to the true Sabbath of the Soul.

But thou, Angel of the everlaſting Covenant, who ſenteſt thy miniſtring Spirits to reſcue righteous *Lot*, who leadeſt thy Sheep by the Hands of *Moſes* and *Aaron*---And didſt appear in a Viſion to *Ananias*, commanding him to go and lay his Hands upon thy Servant *Saul*;---Send me alway a faithful and experienced Paſtor, who may lead me by the Hand, and keep me from lingring in my

my ſpiritual *Sodom*, by his prudent Directions under thee, and preſerve me from the Snares and Fury of my ſpiritual Adverſaries, which otherwiſe may overtake and deſtroy my Soul.

O make me teachable like a little Child---Convert my Soul and bring it low---Grant I may be willing to learn what Things I ought to do, and alſo may have Power faithfully to fulfil the ſame.

Strengthen me, I beſeech thee, by the holy Spirit to cut off a Right Hand, to pluck out a right Eye, lay aſide every Weight, eſpecially the Sin that doth moſt eaſily beſet me--To forſake Father and Mother, Brethren and Siſters, yea, and my own Life alſo, rather than not be thy Diſciple.

O ſuffer me not to deceive my own Soul by a partial Reformation----Search me and try me, and examine my Heart, and let no ſecret [illegible] tified Lu[illegible]ffion ever keep me f[illegible] everla[illegible]

[illegible] not my own. Thou [illegible] bought [illegible] the Price of thy Son's [illegible] precious

[illegible] hou haſt often [illegible]ired, an[illegible], I now give [illegible]ee my Heart, to the be[illegible]y Knowledge, without ſecretly keeping ba[illegible]he leaſt Part. For whom have I in Heaven but thee, and what is there on Earth that I can deſire in Compariſon of thee!

O mould me into thy own moſt bleſſed Image, my Lord and my God. Fill me with thy Grace here, fit me for thy Glory hereafter. Even ſo, Lord *Jeſus*. *Amen* and *Amen*. A

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